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THE

NATIONAL PREACHER.

THIRD SERIES. JAN. and FEB., 1863. Vol. II.—Nos. 1 and 2.

SERMON I.*

BY REV. ALBERT BARNES,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

THE CONDITIONS OF PEACE.

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord."—PSALM 92: 1.

There never has been a time, in our own country, or in other countries, when, if a man had any thing to say that could comfort, animate, or encourage his fellow-citizens, or had any claim, derived from his age, his position, or his experience to impart counsel, it could be more appropriately done than now. Involved in a war such as has existed in no other nation; with numerous enemies to the government in every part of the land; with reverses that tend to humble us in our own eyes and before the world; with comparatively little progress in the great objects of the war; with a demand on the resources of the loyal part of the nation that test to the utmost its ability and its patriotism; when measures are adopted, most extreme in their nature, and that try to the extreme of endurance the loyalty of the people—measures submitted to as a temporary necessity, only because it is believed that there are greater interests that would be imperiled if they were not adopted; with no manifest sympathy among the nations of the earth, and with little real sympathy from any of those nations; with the nations of the old world looking greedily for the entire breaking up of our institutions, and the overthrow of a free

* A Thanksgiving discourse delivered in the First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, November 27, 1862.

government, the result of so much sacrifice and toil, and the last hope of free institutions on earth; a contest in reference to which the people from whom we have sprung, whose language we speak, whose religion we have inherited, and whose blood flows in our veins, seem most of all to rejoice at the prospect of our utter discomfiture, rupture and downfall; exulting in our disasters, taunting us for a want of military and civil power and skill, and, under a pretense of neutrality, really in alliance with those who have risen in arms to overthrow the government, and strangely sympathizing with an organization based avowedly on the perpetual subjugation of one part of the race to the will of another—under circumstances such as these we meet to-day to inquire what there is to be thankful for; what there is to encourage hope, what there is to cheer in the prospect of the future; what should be done—what can we do for the afflicted land that we love?

Without, I trust, any improper reference of a personal nature, I may be permitted to say that I have reached a period of life when a man ought to be able to make some suggestions of value in such a crisis as this; when he ought to be able to say something that might be well founded in regard to the causes of such a state of things; to the evils which have brought so great calamities upon the land; to the remedies for those evils; to what may reasonably be hoped for in the future. I have, at any rate, reached a period of life when I have little to hope or to fear from my fellow-men; yet a period when a man, with any right feeling, is conscious of a stronger love for his country in proportion to the nearness of the time when he is soon to be withdrawn from it. In such circumstances a man may venture on suggestions which would have been less proper at an earlier period of life—suggestions, perhaps not put forward with as much boldness and confidence as the suggestions of earlier years, yet, if he has reflected at all aright, with a more comprehensive view of the great issues at stake, and with deeper solemnity. He who has little to hope for personally, in this world; whose aspirations must be now so almost entirely in the world which he is soon to enter, may still cherish a hope for his country, for the Church, and for mankind, not the less intense because the great blessings of religion and liberty are hereafter to be enjoyed by others, not by himself.

I shall venture, therefore, on this occasion, to make some suggestions which, I trust may not be improper, and which I am sure will be well received so far as the intention goes, in reference to what our country has been as one of the family of nations; to the grounds of grateful feelings to-day; and to what seems to me to be demanded for the restoration of peace. The suggestions will be loyal, but they will be free. In all my life I have defended freedom of speech, and fought many a

battle for it. I have felt no restraint on that subject hitherto; I feel none now. I believe that when freedom of speech shall be taken away, the last hope of the nation—the last remnant of liberty will be gone.

I believe that we have the best constitution, and the best mode of government in the world, and that it is the most wicked of all acts that man can do at home, and the most wicked of all things that nations can countenance abroad, to attempt to destroy that constitution, and to overthrow that government. And yet I believe that mistakes were made in framing that constitution, inevitable, it may have been, in the circumstances, which time has developed, and which have culminated in this most wicked rebellion; that there are evils contained in the constitution which it is possible still to remedy and remove, and which must be remedied and removed, if the great purposes of the formation of the constitution shall be carried out in a restored and permanent Union. Our fathers were not ignorant of the existence of those evils. They could not, or they supposed they could not, remove them. They hoped that time and wisdom, that the experience and patriotism of the nation, would remove them. Time, progress, ambition, selfishness, conflicting interests, have developed the evil; rebebellion has shown to us its magnitude; the desolations of war, the tens of thousands slain on battle-fields, the tens of thousands maimed for life, the tens of thousands of families bereaved, the tens of thousands of graves newly made, where sleep those who have been called forth in defense of their country, show how great was the evil, and call on the nation to arise and readjust our institutions in accordance with the eternal principles of righteousness. It may be that those evils could be removed only by the baptism of fire and and of blood through which our nation is now passing.

The past in our history is fixed, and so fixed that, in the main, coming times will not reproach us; in such a way that foreign nations, however much they may now desire it, could not find occasion to exult over us. "The past," said Mr. Webster, in relation to a part of our country—to Massachusetts—"the past, at least, is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington, and Bunker Hill, and there they will remain forever. The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State, from New England to Georgia; and there they will lie forever."* So we may say, in similar respects, of our whole country; of our whole history. There is Plymouth, there are Yorktown, and Saratoga, and Trenton, and Princeton, and there they will remain forever.

Thus, too, it is with the history of our fathers; with the

* Speeches, vol. i. p 407.

settlement of our country; with the pearls, the sacrifices, the self-denials, of those who came to this western world to found a new empire; to establish institutions that should be free. Foreign nations can not now go back and reproach us for what our fathers were, nor for what they did. Reproach for those who drove them out, and who compelled them to leave their own land, then a land of oppression, there is enough of in history, and the judgment of the world on that subject is not to be reversed. The world knows by heart the history of the men that came to this continent. It understands the reason why they came. It has learned the character of their principles, and the extent of their sufferings. It knows what they did, and that record is engraved as in eternal brass. England, with all that is bitter in her feelings now, can not be suffered, and will not be suffered, to go back and change the judgment of mankind in regard to the reasons why the Pilgrims left her shores, or what they did in penetrating the forests of the New World. No nation has ever had such a commencement of its history as ours—so pure, so noble, so self-sacrificing, so comprehensive and far-reaching in the principles of the men who founded it. Not Egypt, nor Assyria, nor Babylon, nor Greece, nor Rome; not among the ancients, nor among the moderns, has there been a beginning in respect to which there will be so much which the world, in its better days, will be glad to retain in its history; one which it will be so unwilling to "let die."

The past is fixed too as we would desire it should be, in regard to the establishment of the independence of our country. It was not hasty; not rash; not ill-advised. It was not the result of passion, nor did it spring from any ill-feeling toward the mother-country, or any desire of doing her wrong. It was a measure resorted to after a long series of oppressions and wrongs, and after appeal and remonstrance had proved to be vain. To the British Sovereign; to the British Parliament; to the British nation, those appeals and remonstrances had been made long, and continued to be made till the last hope of their being effectual, even in the minds of those most reluctant to engage in war, had died away.

And the war of independence itself was such that the nation has no cause to look upon it with shame; nor has history anything to record in regard to it to our reproach. It was not, on our part a war of barbarism; it was not conducted by calling in the aid of the scalping-knife and the tomahawk; it was not stained by bad faith, or by dishonorable deeds; it was not conducted on principles that subject us to just reproach among the nations. No great revolution was ever conducted with so little to give pain or cause regret in the recollection; no war has been waged at any time in which there was so little to give just offense, or to shock the moral sense of mankind.

The past is fixed, and fixed, in the main, as we should desire it to be, in regard to the organization of the government of the country as Independent. It was done in a peaceful manner; it was done when the highest wisdom of the nation was summoned to calm and deliberate investigation. Not a measure was adopted as the result of force or of fear; not a provision was put into the Constitution at the instigation of the bayonet. Never before in the history of the world was there assembled such a body of men for the purpose of framing a constitution for the government of a great country, and never before has there been seen in our world a spectacle so sublime as pertaining to the origin of a nation, as when that constitution was submitted to the calm judgment of a people then numbering three millions. In securing its adoption, not a vote was forced; no man voted because he was afraid to vote otherwise; no man voted because his vote had been bought.

To the formation of that Constitution, and to the Constitution itself, we now look with gratitude, with pride, as the chief, the crown of the blessings which God has given to this land. To say that it has no defects, is what no American has ever been required to say; to say that it could not be made better, would be to deny the very principles of the Constitntion itself, for it has made provision for its own amendment. Our fathers were sagacious enough to see that there were evils existing which there was then not power to remove, but which it was hoped time and good feeling might remove; they saw that among a people destined to grow and to spread over a vast extent of territory, there might be provisions desirable which had not occurred to them; they saw that in the unknown future, when a comparatively small population should be multiplied to hundreds of millions; when a vast expanse of forest should be subdued, and become the abode of civilized men; when rivers and lakes then unexplored even so as to give their course or outline on a map, should bear on their bosoms the productions of a teeming soil; when the commerce of the infant nation might whiten every sea, and new relations might spring up with other nations of the earth, there might be occasion for change, and it might be proper to appeal to the wisdom of the nation and examine the new state of things which demands the change. The Constitution, we may admit, was not perfect. But it was the noblest and best that the world had seen. It has made us great. It has developed our resources. It has made us respected and feared wherever it was desirable that we should be respected and feared. It has created for us a navy; it has created a commerce; it has saved us from border wars; it has made the North what it is, and the South what it is; the great West what it is, and what neither could have been but for the Constitution.

The past is fixed in regard to our treatment of the nations

of the old world, and fixed in a manner which we have little to regret, and little that we might wish now to have changed. We have desired sincerely to be with all those nations, at peace. We have been disposed to make equal and just treaties with them in regard to commerce. We have sought to take no improper advantage of them. We have been willing to visit with them every distant sea, and every distant port, and to share with them in the fair avails of commerce. We have impressed none of their seamen into our service. We have made no war on their peaceful pursuits. We have never intermeddled with their affairs, but have aimed to stand not merely professedly but really aloof from all the conflicts which they have waged among themselves; to maintain not a hollow and hypocritical, but a real neutrality in regard to the wars, right or wrong, in which they have been engaged. We have seen them often waging what we regarded as unjust wars. We have seen them invading peaceful nations. We have seen them attempt to suppress insurrection and rebellion in their own provinces by means that, as a Christian and civilized people, we could not but regard as barbarous and cruel—in a manner that, in the language of the Earl of Chatham, when describing a measure which had been deliberately proposed in the House of Lords to be pursued in reference to the revolted colonies of America, "shocked us as lovers of honorable war, and as detestors of murderous barbarity." We have seen them binding men to the cannon's mouth, and sweeping them by scores into eternity. We have seen them, for the purpose of compelling a foreign nation to admit as an article of commerce and consumption, against their own just and humane laws, a drug most deleterious to the bodies and the souls of men—destructive to morals; destructive to religion; destructive to domestic peace; destructive to national progress—waging a fearful, a bloody, and a horrid war, until the object was accomplished, and the ports of the greatest nation of the world were compelled to be thrown open to admit that, in commerce, which would spread wo, and sorrow, and wretchedness everywhere. We have not interfered. We have not even taken part with the oppressed and the wronged. We have not, in a public and national manner, uttered the language of remonstrance at such barbarities and atrocities. We did indeed interpose when Scio was laid waste by fire and sword, and her beautiful villas and gardens were smoking ruins; when the olive-yards of the Peloponnesus were cut down, and the Turk had laid all waste; when Greece, once the land of beauty and the home of civilization and art, was suffering all the ills of famine from the desolation of a ruthless war—then we interfered by the noble resolution in Congress, and the noble speech of Mr. Webster, and by contributions, not of arms and implements of death, but of food for the famishing, from churches, and villages, and private citizens,

to relieve those sufferers. And when the scourge of famine and pestilence swept over Ireland, and England failed to supply the wants of the famishing, we did interfere—we hastened to relieve them: an act which Ireland has never forgotten, but which England has. Beyond things like these we have not ventured to interfere in the affairs of nations, remote or near; and in regard to nations, we have at least the consciousness that in our treatment of them we have endeavored to carry out the great principles which we have designed to lay at the foundation of our own prosperity, that justice, and truth, and honesty, are the best foundation of a nation's progress, as they are of the welfare of an individual—that "righteousness exalteth a nation." That we are innocent in regard to all men—to those within our own borders—the Indian, the African, we cannot indeed affirm; to foreign nations our course has not been one of dishonor and shame, and we are willing that it should be known and read by all men.

In all these respects we look with special pleasure and approbation on our treatment of the land of our fathers. England has been dear to us. There are the graves of the ancestors of our Carvers, our Brewsters, our Hancocks, and our Adamses—of our Henrys, and our Pinckneys—of Washington. Its language is ours. Its religion is ours. Its history is ours. We delight to think that Milton, and Cowper, and Shakspeare, and Newton, and Bacon, are no more theirs than ours. We visit that land with emotions such as we can have toward no other land—save Palestine, and in Westminster Abbey we sit down and weep, for there we are surrounded by the monuments, and tread on the graves of the illustrious dead, whose names and works have been familiar to us from our cradles. We have not been unwilling to bear much from England; and to forget all the past, when we could show to her respect and affection. We welcomed the Heir apparent to her throne to our shores, and gave him an "ovation" in the land, not forced and formal, but hearty and sincere, for the nation honored and respected the pure and virtuous character of her that bore him, and wished well to him and to the land where he would occupy the throne.

The past is fixed, and fixed in the main as we would desire it should be, in regard to the manner in which the resources of this land have been developed; to our growth and our greatness. That we have been proud of this; that we have boasted of it; that we have attributed it to ourselves; that we have felt that we might defy the world; that we have supposed that nothing could now retard our progress; and that, with all that there has been of greatness in that which was good, there has sprung up a rank and pestilential growth of evil corresponding in some measure with the magnitude of the good, we are not disposed to deny.

But still the nation has become great; greater than any other nation has ever become in the same period of time; great in the main, in the right direction. No other nation has ever advanced so rapidly, or developed such resources in the same period of time. Not Egypt; not Assyria; not Babylon; not Persia under Cyrus, and his successors; not Greece; not Rome; not Germany, Gaul, or Britain. Britain—it was long and slow from the time of the Druids, from the time of Alfred, from the time of William the Red-haired, before the resources of the little island were in any measure developed—more than a thousand years from the time of Alfred. We might have hoped that England would have looked on, with gratification, at the amazing development here of institutions and of power, derived in a great measure from herself, and among those who spoke her own language. For the development here was in the same line as that which had made England, small in territory, great in wealth, in influence, and in power. It was a development in agricultural improvements, in schools, in colleges, in the comforts of life, in intelligence, in liberty, in religion, in commerce, in labor-saving inventions. We had carried out in our purposes all that we had derived of good from the mother conntry; we had endeavored to avoid that which was evil in her example, and prevent the ill consequences of what she had entailed upon us. All that had been good in her learning, her religion, her laws, her literature, her morals, her arts, we were endeavoring to make our own, and to spread them as rapidly as possible over the vast domain which God had put in our possession, and we have done it to an extent which the world has never before seen. The evil which there had been in the memory of former things, and the evil in her example, and the evil which she had entailed upon us, we were endeavoring to avoid and remove. We had forgotten, as a people, the history of her persecutions—those persecutions which oppressed our ancestors, and which drove them out on the wide and stormy ocean in frail barks, to an uninhabited wilderness, and we were willing that those things should pass from our memory, and from the memory of mankind; saying, in kindness, to the people of the mother country, as Joseph did to his brethren: "As for you, ye thought evil against us, but God meant it unto good." (Gen. 50 : 20.) We had seen evil in some of the institutions of the mother country, in her form of government, in her aristocracy, in her oppression of the poor, and we endeavored to avoid them, and to carry out, in free institutions, her own ideas of liberty. We did not inherit, perhaps partly from the necessity of the case, since God gave us, without a war of conquest, more territory than we know what to do with, her love of conquest, and we meant to live in peace with all the world. There was, indeed, and there is, one great evil which we had inherited, which has been our bane, and the cause of all our trouble,

which we had not, up to the war, been able to remove. Our fathers complained that England had forced it upon us. It was an original charge in the Declaration of Independence, that this had been forced upon the Colonies without their consent. England was more responsible for it than we were. Those unhappy foreigners of a different skin had been conveyed here in British ships, and under British laws, and in the use of British capital, and for the purposes of British gain. The suppression of the trade was then demanded by no developed principle in the British constitution, and by no prevailing feeling of the British people, It was long, long after this, that the case of Somerset occurred, in which it was determined that slavery in England was contrary to the British constitution, and the delivery of the opinion of Lord Mansfield in that case constituted an epoch in English history. But the evil was already entailed upon us, and the great principle which was thus, at a late period announced in England, came too late to reach the evil which she had inaugurated in the Colonies, for then we were an independent people. Oh! how happy had it been for us, for England, for Africa, for the world, if Mansfield had lived a century earlier; if a similar case had occurred then; and if the great sentiment of liberty which went forth when he uttered that memorable opinion, had covered the colonies as well as the little parent isle—that sentence which proclaimed that: "The air of England had long been too pure for a slave, and every man is free who breathes it. Every man who comes into England is entitled to the protection of English laws, whatever oppression he may heretofore have suffered, and whatever may be the color of his skin:

Quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses."*

But the evil was fastened upon us. It had struck its roots deep. It threatened to fill the land. We have not been able to remove it, and when we failed from want of power, or want of will, or both, God took the matter into his own hands; and on the throes, and conflicts, and stripes, and blood, and sacrifice, and sorrow, incident to it, England looks without sympathy, without any manifested regard for her own principles, apparently willing now that the curse which she entailed upon us shall rend our Republic, break down forever our free institutions, and bathe the land which she has herself twice endeavored in vain to conquer, in oceans of blood.

We may not boast. We have not been, and are not, as a nation, what we should be; but we may say without boasting, and in graceful language appropriate to this day, that the sun has yet to shine upon a land where there has been more public and private virtue; where there has been more domestic peace

* Lord Campbell's "Lives of the Chief Justices of England," vol. ii., p. 231.

and tranquility; where there has been a wider influence of education; where the obligation of contracts has been more sacredly regarded; where there is more respect to law as law; where there is greater security of property or of personal rights; where there is, on the whole, as much purity of religion; where there is so much happiness springing from the virtues of domestic life. There has been, there is, no land where an unprotected female could travel so far, and meet with so much attention, and be so safe from rudeness. There is no land where so large a proportion of the population can read and keep accounts. There is no land where the laws can be so easily executed without the representatives and the insignia of military power. There is no land where life and property are so safe. I passed, as thousands of others have done, and still do, the early years of my life in a quiet home, on whose doors and windows there never had been a lock, or bolt, or a fastening of any kind—not even a nail; and where a peaceful and industrious family lived for more than half a century, without fear, alarm, or peril. To what other land will men go, save it may be Switzerland, where scenes like these are common?

So much for the years that have gone by, and whose results have ceased to be our particular history, and have passed into the general history of the world.

We meet to-day, especially, to recall the mercies of another year. It, too, is now passed, with all that it had for us of joy or sorrow, prosperity or adversity, peace or war, laughing or tears, sleep, rest, toil, trouble, anxiety, bereavement, gain, loss, public grief, or private sorrow. It has been such a year as our country has never experienced before, and will make more work for the calm and impartial historian of future times, than any one year in all our public history. For there are sad things to be recorded which may not look as sad as they now do, when they are fairly recorded; things to be explained, which can not now be explained; reverses to be set in a true light, whose causes can not now be understood; plans broken, defeated, or accomplished, not now understood, which are to have an important bearing on our future history, and whose bearings can only be seen in that future. There are men who, during this year, have made their first appearance on the stage of human affairs, whose life, plans, and purposes may exert a most important influence on the future history of the world; men whose characters are not yet understood, and whose acts can be explained only in future times, when the smoke and mist which now envelop them shall pass away, and there shall be the return of a clear and unclouded sky; for the land has not only been enveloped in the smoke and dust of battle, but the campaigns, the plans, the victories—why any, why not more; the characters and purposes of many of the actors in these scenes, are as yet enveloped in smoke and dust, like the battle-field. There have

been reverses such as no nation with similar power and resources ever knew; and there have been great deeds which will make the year memorable among all the years of our history. No man commends his own wisdom who pretends now to understand the events of this passing year.

There have been scenes, indeed, which have filled the land with sorrow, for the central part of our land is almost one great hospital or graveyard, and desolation has marched over great tracts which were before, the scene of quiet homes, and green fields, and orchards; the peaceful places of churches and schools. If this were a day for a fasting, humiliation, and prayer, it would seem to be much easier to find topics appropriate for such a day than for a day of thankfulness to God; nor should we forget this while we endeavor to find topics for devout acknowledgement of the divine goodness. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord," and man can always find, if he will, that for which his heart should rise in gratitude to his Maker.

Personally, life, health, food, raiment, home, friends, social blessings; the Providence which has kept us in the ways of virtue, honesty, and truth; the advances which we have made in knowledge; the tranquil hours that we have spent; the support we have had in trouble; the blessings of salvation and the hope of heaven; the fact that all along through the year God has been merciful to our unrighteousness. and has been willing to hear our prayers in all circumstances, and to save our souls —all these and kindred things should rise up to remembrance as we recall the events of another year.

Our land, too, even amidst the desolating scenes of war, has yielded abundance. Half a million and more of men have been withdrawn from the peaceful pursuits of life, and have been in tents, or without tents, away from their homes; and these, too, in the main, composed of that class who do the hard work of the field, the plowing, sowing, reaping, and gathering into barns; yet, in our Northern States, it does not appear that an acre less than usual has been cultivated, and never have the fields yielded a more abundant harvest; never have the orchards been borne down with more abundant fruits; never in our history, has there been, strange as it may seem, a greater amount of exports of those things needful for life.

The year has been a year remarkable for health, for freedom from the ravages, even the local ravages of disease. Not as in other years have we been summoned to sympathize with portions of our country visited with pestilential diseases, and to send or go, that those in attendance on the sick and the dying, might themselves become martyrs in the cause of kindness and charity.

Our land, in schools, colleges, churches, seminaries of learning, is still a prosperous and a happy land. Those schools

have not been broken up, those colleges have not been disbanded—not even closed by war; those churches, though diminished in many cases in the numbers, sent and drawn for the field, are not closed; those seminaries of learning, for the youths of either sex, for agriculture, for preparation in the studies of the professions—law, medicine, divinity, are scarcely even checked in the career of providing for the wants of the next generation.

The nation, in all these things, in all that makes a nation prosperous, is prosperous even amidst, these scenes of war, and there is not now on the face of the globe a land in passing through which a stranger would see everywhere so many evidences of domestic peace, of happy homes, of successful agriculture, of life, and energy, and activity, in the marts of business, or on the wharves of commerce, as in this land, even amidst all that is sad and desolating in war.

We have been enabled to maintain peace with the world at large; to secure the sympathy and kindness of some of them; to check the outrages and wrongs of others; to hold them at a distance when they threatened us: to calm their rage by successful acts of diplomacy and by just explanations when they were ready to make war upon us; to prevent a recognition of the portion of our land engaged in this great rebellion, even when the attempt has been made to show that every interest of foreigners, and all the concentrated hatred of our prosperity and of our institutions, and all the long-cherished desire of our division and our ruin, demanded such a recognition. In future times it will be regarded as among the most memorable things in this year that the independence of the Southern Confederacy was not recognized abroad, and that the affairs of our nation have been so wisely conducted in this respect, that God could properly so interpose and stay the wrath and the desires of interest, and hatred, and of jealousy, as to prevent a recognition which might have severed our Union forever, and which would have involved us in conflicts with the powers of the old world, and perhaps have kindled a universal war.

The power of the government to sustain itself, and the disposition of the nation to sustain it, have been evinced. If during the year now closing, we have not done all that we hoped to do; if there have been mistakes and errors in conducting the war; if there have been sad and mortifying reverses, it is still true that the rebellion has not been successful, and still apparent to ourselves and to the world that this government—this constitution—is settled on a foundation which no mere power of man can overthrow. Never in the history of the world has there been so formidable a rebellion as this, and never has there been a year which so much tried the strength of a government as this year has tried the strength of ours. Extraordinary measures have, indeed, been adopted—measures

regarded by a part of the people, even of the friends of the administration, as perilous to liberty, and not sanctioned by the Constitution; and endured only because they were regarded as necessary for the time, and, therefore, in the willingness to submit to such measures even for a time, furnishing one of the strongest proofs of the true amount of patriotism in the hearts of the people; but none of these things has had power to change the settled purpose of the nation to maintain the Union and the Constitution, and to restore peace by any expenditure of treasure and of blood that may be necessary. On this point there is at present but one voice at the North; and the formation of parties is not based on the question whether the war shall or shall not be prosecuted, and whether the government shall or shall not be sustained. I consider this firm purpose to sustain the government; to defend the country; to place at the disposal of the government all the money, and all the men that may be necessary to sustain its operations by land and by sea, as one of the most remarkable events in the history of the world, and one of the best evidences of the freedom, and, at the same time, of the vigor of the government. The year which is now closing may yet be regarded as among the most remarkable in the history of the world, as thus testing the power of a Republic, and answering the question so often asked with no friendly spirit abroad, whether republican institutions can be permanent; whether nations have the power of self-government. If this government can go through this war without being overthrown, there is no earthly power that it will have reason to fear, at home or abroad. Foreign nations see this; and with anxiety, and hatred, and hope, they are watching this struggle as decisive of what they have to fear in the working of their own institutions, and what they may have to fear if they provoke a war hereafter with the American people.

Perhaps most of all as adapted to shape the future history of our country, and to make this year remembered with gratitude by those who love the liberty of man, it may be regarded as most eventful in breaking the bonds of servitude, and removing the great evil—the cause of all our troubles. In the din and conflict of battle; in the anxiety which all have felt in regard to the armies summoned from the people—the anxiety of fathers, and mothers, and wives, and brothers, and sisters, about those dear to them exposed to the perils of the camp; in the wail of sorrow which has come up from all parts of the land; in the records of victories and defeats, keeping the attention of the nation fixed most intensely on one object, there may have been scenes enacted which have scarcely attracted attention, which will go more deeply into the future welfare of the nation than any events which have occurred in former times, and which, now occurring almost without notice, could not have been secured before without the danger of a revolution. Twen-

ty years ago it required all the talent, the eloquence, and the influence of John Quincy Adams, to dare to present to Congress a petition for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and a law to that effect then would have involved the nation in a civil war. This year it has been done; and so quietly and calmly, that the nation has been scarcely aware of it; and yet it is done; it can not be undone. The Territories—the vast Territories—of the nation, hereafter to be great States larger than many of the kingdoms of the old world, are free, and, as territories, they are to be free forever from the tread of the slave; from laws reducing men to chattels; from laws which authorize the traffic in the bodies and souls of men: yet who almost is aware of it? Who has heard the voice of thanksgiving for it? Who has reverently paused in the din of arms, and the surges of war, to thank God for it?

A blow has been given to the slave-trade this year such as has never been struck before. It was indeed piracy by our laws, and by the laws of other nations; but it was piracy on paper only. In our principal marts of commerce, and under the influence of men most prominent for station, and wealth, and enterprise, vessels were freely fitted out for this traffic, and the infamous men engaged in the traffic were allowed to go at large with impunity. It needed an example to show that any thing was meant by our paper laws, and that we were not dealing falsely with mankind in proclaiming the traffic to be piracy; and it needed, and it found, one man who had firmness enough to carry out the principle, and to show what the nation understood by the term as applied to that species of commerce, and at last one guilty man for this crime has suffered the just penalty of the law. A great movement, such as this nation has never before seen, has been suggested and recommended on the subject of emancipation. Never before has a suggestion on that subject been made by a President of the United States; never before commended to Congress; never before received the sanction of the Representatives of the people: and yet it was so wise, so calm, so free from any attempt at compulsion; it so left it to the States themselves; it offered such a fair compensation; it would have such ultimate influences if acted on, as, in the very form in which it was submitted, to constitute an epoch in the history of our country. It was an epoch in the history of England when a member of Parliament ventured to suggest the idea of Emancipation in the British colonies: it was much more when a President of the United States ventured to use the term, and to suggest the idea, as a practical one. And then this year will be still more remarkable for things not yet recorded; whose bearings are not yet seen; whose influence on this subject is to go far into future times; things which, whatever may be the issue of the present conflict, will make new adjustments necessary. Slavery is not what it was; it will

never be what it was again. The Fugitive Slave Law is not what it was; it can never be what it was again. The slave all along the Border States is a different being from what he was; is more of a man; is less a "chattel" and a "thing;" is of less value as "property" than he was, or ever will be again. The power springing from this source, which once, and so long, controlled the nation, is broken, and, whatever may be the issue of this struggle, is not to be a controlling power again. Thousands and tens of thousands, have tasted of freedom who never knew it before, and we begin to look on to times when the land shall be free. Could we now see what the future patriot will see; could we see all the secret influences at work this year for the good of the nation; could we see all those deep and broad streams of liberty and happiness which will flow out to future times to fertilize and bless the land and the world: no language which we can now use would be such as would properly express the praise due to God for what may spring out of the events of this year. Our minds are indeed pensive and filled with sadness. Our eyes "pour out tears unto God." But there is light beyond; and those who will live in the future may see, even in what gives us sorrow now, reasons for adoration and praise in a land made more happy; a land without our conflicts and troubles; a land where man shall be every where recognized and treated as a man; a land that shall be truly free.

The past is fixed; and we should be grateful to-day. The future is to us now the great source of solicitude and anxiety. This dreadful war! When will it end? How will it end? What good will be accomplished by it? What compensation can there be for all this blood and treasure—for all these woes and sorrows? What will be the condition of our country when it is ended? Shall we be one, or two, or many; a people with one government, one constitution; one purpose; or a broken people with no government, and no constitution; a people destined to perpetual border wars, or a people, all our liberties gone, to be collected into one, if ever one again, under a military despotism? We can not but ask these questions with anxious hearts; we can not answer them; we can not find any thing that will calm the mind but in the belief that there is a God, and that the God of our Fathers, having now, as he had in their troubled days, his own plans, can and will interpose as he did then. At His feet we are safe; and at His feet we may be calm, and there, with humbled hearts, having learned great and valuable lessons in regard to our pride, and self-sufficiency, and dependence, it is His manifest purpose to bring us. When we are actually brought there, with right feelings, then, and not till then, may we "look up," for then we may feel that "the day of our redemption draweth nigh."

But can we see nothing now to inspire hope? Can we see nothing that may be changed for the better by the war? Can

we see no evils in the past that this fearful struggle is likely to correct? Can we not see what would conduce to permanent peace, and what would prevent a recurrence in future times of such fearful and bloody conflicts? Valuable above what our fathers left us, rich as was that inheritance, will be the legacy which we of this generation shall leave to aftertimes, if we can leave a government, a constitution, where the causes of collision will be removed, and those evils which have been culminating for eighty years will exist no more.

There will be peace. This war, among a people of the same language, the same religion, the same interests, will not last always; it will not last long. All men must see that it must come to an end; all see that it must come to an end at no distant period.

There will be great results that will come out of the war. It is indeed true that war, not always, perhaps rarely, affects the great points immediately at issue; but it is also true that there are other results invaluable to mankind that spring indirectly out of war. There are few great principles of liberty in our institutions, or in the world, whose establishment has not been effected as the result of bloody wars; principles that are worth to mankind all which they have cost; whose influence in promoting the happiness of the world is more than a compensation for all the treasure and blood expended—as the blessings of Christianity are more than an equivalent to mankind for all the toils of apostles, and the sufferings of martyrs.

But can any one suggest now what would be the conditions of a permanent peace; what would remove forever the causes of war and alienation; what would be equal justice to all, to the North and the South; to humanity; to the world? May we venture to suggest, to what point things are tending; can any one venture to paint and describe some of the "shadows" which coming events are forming, and of which the outlines may begin to be apparent?

It can not be the recognition of the Southern Confederacy. In such a recognition, under any form, and with any conceivable arrangement, there must remain the occasions for war, for constantly recurring appeals to arms. Apart from the principle, the asserted right of secession which this would involve, and which might be as proper in any other case as the present; apart from the public recognition as right of all the treason in high places, the robbery and the wrongs done to the nation's property and the nation's honor, there would be things which could never be adjusted to the idea of peace and concord. With fifteen hundred or two thousand miles of coterminous territory, requiring vigilance at every mile in collecting the revenues, and every where furnishing occasions of collision; with different views of trade and commerce; with great rivers flowing across any possible boundaries, and whose navigation

would be necessary for the prosperity of either portion ; with the different institutions of freedom and slavery coming constantly into collision; with no common regulations in regard to commerce and trade; with no united strength as presented to the nations abroad; with no national credit; with no national navy; with no national name, there could not be arrangements for permanent peace.

It is equally clear that there can not be permanent peace under the arrangements which have existed heretofore; even those which have been admitted into the Constitution. The same causes would again produce the same effects. This war is not accidental. It is not a sudden outbreak. It is not the result of individual ambition. There are things in the frame of the government which have tended, under existing circumstances, to produce it, and which would produce it again. There are evils whose growth could not be checked by any provisions in the Constitution; evils which mere time could not remedy. No man is bound by any proper principles of loyalty to say that the Constitution is perfect ; no man exposes himself to any just charge of disloyalty to say that it might be amended to advantage; no man is now in the interest of the rebellion who ventures to say that the amended Constitution of the "Southern Confederacy" has provisions which it would be well to introduce into the General Constitution of the Union.

It is not strange that in an instrument like that of the Constitution of the United States, a re-adjustment might be demanded. Our fathers, as already remarked, wise as they were, saw this, admitted it, made provision for it. But few years passed away, as yet without any painful collision, but anticipating such a possible collision, when it was found necessary to apply the principle, and at no period has it been regarded as showing any disrespect to that immortal instrument, to suggest that it might be amended. After eighty years in which its practical workings have been seen; after the wonders which have been wrought under it; after all the proofs of amazing wisdom in its general structure and provisions; after all that it has done to give us a place among the nations of the earth; and after the experience of the evils which have resulted from a few of its provisions, as now developed in scenes of dreadful carnage and blood, assuredly there should be wisdom and patriotism enough in the North and the South to attempt a re-adjustment; to secure the just rights of all; to remove, forever, if possible, the causes of collision and war.

What would such arrangements be ? May a man, not a politician; not a statesman; devoted from early years to other pursuits; having no claims to be heard beyond that small circle whom his official position entitles him to address, or whose ear he may have gained by a life spent in the honest desire to do

good to mankind; yet a man who, in humble imitation of the great statesman, would desire that "when his eyes shall be turned to behold, for the las time, the sun in heaven, he may not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched in fraternal blood"—may such a man, in his place, suggest what would seem to him to be demanded as the conditions and terms of abiding peace?

The first great principle in the return of peace must be the suppression of this rebellion as rebellion. It must be founded on the laying down of hostile arms by those who have made war on the flag of the nation; the restoration of forts and arsenals, and public property, seized by force or fraud; the recognition of the laws of the Union; the abandonment of the whole principle in regard to the right of Secession. In all cases of rebellion, there must be a submission to just authority before there can be proposals and conditions of peace. God treats with men in rebellion only when they submit to authority and law; and a government that recognizes a conspiracy and a rebellion, and which treats with it as such, is already at an end. The throne of God would have long since crumbled to atoms, and the universe would have long since been chaotic and anarchcial, if any other principle had been recognized in the divine administration than that of submission to the just and equal laws of heaven. The welfare of the nation; its name, its power, its credit, its influence, and the happiness of innumerable millions on this continent, all demand that this great principle shall be settled now and forever, that there is a "GOVERNMENT" here; that it is a government in the highest sense of the term; that under that government, and in its proper operation, it has power to enforce its own laws, and to extend its control, under constitutional limits, all over the land. The immediate question now is, whether that can be done; the solution of that question is to determine the destiny of this nation for all coming time. The duty now, the immediate duty, the sole duty, is to suppress this rebellion, and to establish the authority of law; to maintain the Union. That, and that only, is the purpose of the war. That, and that only, makes the war right. That, and that only, will make its issues safe. Any thing else —even any scheme of benevolence; any measure based on the intrinsic wrong of slavery; any thing that contemplates the amelioration of the condition of any portion of the population; any act of justice to the oppressed and the wronged as such; any redressing of old grievances, or any rendering of tardy justice long delayed; any proposed amendments of the Constitution as a basis or a promised pledge, valuable as they might be in themselves, and incidental as they may be in the prosecution of the war, would be aside from its design; would be a

violation of the Constitution—would properly subject an Executive to impeachment. There is one object befor the nation now, and but one; those rebellious men must be beaten on the battle-field; those forts and arsenals must be restored; those custom-houses must be put again under the control of the nation; those armies must be dispersed; those new laws, which are not laws of the "Confederacy," must be abrogated; the honored old flag must float again over every part of the land, before there can be permanent peace. "No other measure than this will preserve the integrity, the dignity, and the glory of this government. No other measure will prove to the world that we are what we profess to be—A NATION. No other will settle this controversy on a lasting basis." Failing here, we fail altogether, and the cherished hopes of our fathers will have vanished forever; and the exultation of those who, beyond the seas, hate liberty, and us, as the representatives of liberty, will be complete.

The second thing is the preservation of the Union. Men talk traitorously when they speak with complacency of the breaking up of this Union. The old thirteen States, under the articles of the Confederation, and before the Federal Union was formed, found themselves unable to carry on the operations of a government. They had no government, no army, no navy, no credit, no power. The Southern Confederacy would have no power now were it not for the pressure of the war which keeps them together. It is the Union which has made us, and which has kept us. We must be one great nation, or twenty or more divided and separate and jarring, feeble powers. We must be one in respect to war and peace, and commerce and trade, and credit; we must be one in view of ourselves, one in view of the world. Besides, who would be authorized to propose peace on any other terms or conditions than the preservation of the Union? Who has been chosen by the people for any such purpose? Who, under the Constitution, has any such authority? Within the proper limits of whose oath of office would it come that he should propose or listen to a separation of this Union? What officer in the nation could do this without an usurpation of power never conceded to him, and fatal to liberty?

The third thing essential to permanent peace must be the entire suppression of the slave-trade. Whatever may be true in regard to the moral character of the traffic, it is clear, that in this age of the world, and in the condition of the public opinion in the great mass of the people of this nation, peace and harmony could not exist if this traffic were reopened and continued in any part of the nation. The intrinsic wrong of the traffic, as it appears to one part of the nation, bringing the power of conscience against it, and the supposed interest of the other part of the nation, *urging* its continuance, must pr-

duce a renewal of the conflict; and to secure permanent peace, it must be, in fact, abandoned forever. This has been, is, and must be, the settled purpose of the nation before the world. This was the settled purpose of those who framed the Constitution when they incorporated a provision that this should not be done before a certain period—the year 1808—implying that it might be done, and should be done then; this is the avowed principle, whether sincere or otherwise, of the so-called "Confederacy;" this is now the settled purpose of the government of the United States, declared not only in laws, but in the execution of a guilty man engaged in that horrid traffic. And this must be. The Age demands it. Humanity demands it. The Bible demands it. The best interests of the nation demand it. Our standing among the nations of the earth requires it. The common character of the nation; the common welfare of the community; justice, mercy, religion, all demand that human flesh, among all nations, shall be separated from all those things which pertain to lawful commerce, and the traffic in it branded as the worst form of piracy. As the world would be shocked, and the nations would feel that they had a right to interfere, should either France, or England, or Portugal, or Spain engage in piracy, or countenance or protect it by law; so, with equal right, might the nations of the earth interfere should any one of those engage in the slave-trade. The prohibition of this traffic, could not, therefore, be complained of in any part of our country as a sectional and partial and unequal arrangement, for it lies back of any sectional and local bearing, as that which pertains to justice, to morality, to humanity, to every ground of a claim to a name and place among the nations of the earth. There are eternal principles of right, and they are becoming incorporated, slowly it may be, but certainly, into the code of the laws which are to regulate nations; and as it would not be partial, sectional, or unjust, if a portion of Northern citizens should desire to engage in acts of piracy, and should regard it as for their interest to be permitted to fit out piratical vessels from their ports, if they were prohibited by national laws, on the ground of justice, humanity, the law of God, and the common good; so it is not, and would not be a sectional act, or a partial act, to prohibit the slave-trade to each and every part of the nation. For any new adjustment of the Constitution this should be adopted as a settled principle, proclaiming now before the world, not only that Congress may pass laws prohibiting the traffic in human flesh, but that the trade shall be forever abolished, and that no laws favoring it shall ever be enacted in the United States.

A fourth thing—now shown by the terrible war into which we are plunged, to be essential to permanent peace, and demanded alike by the best interests of the North and the South, and by every principle of just government—is the entire sepa-

ration of the general government from slavery. This, I regard, as THE great principal necessary in the restoration of peace; the great principle on which the Constitution, if ever amended, is to be amended, and on which, if ever, the liberties of our country are to be preserved. Except in the matter just referred to, of prohibiting the slave-trade, the principle should be made universal, that the general government should have no relation to slavery; should in no wise protect it; should in no manner interfere with it to abolish it; should derive no benefit from it; should lend it no support; should in all respects, and at all times, stand wholly aloof from it. The South demands this, in words, at least; the North should yield it; the nation, the world, humanity, justice, national honor, religion, should insist on it forever.

The great evil in this nation, the source of all our national woes, consisted in incorporating with the Constitution any provisions whatever, save in the matter pertaining to the slave-trade, in relation to slavery. This principle, in my judgment, is so important—so vital to permanent peace, so demanded by every sentiment of national honor and justice, that I may be permitted to dwell on it for a moment.

There are three provisions now in the Constitution expressed or assumed, on this subject, which lie at the foundation of all our difficulties; which are unjust to the North and to the South; which are in violation of all the principles of humanity; of what is due to man as man; which are the source of endless contentions and strifes; which originated this dreadful war; which go far to explain the anomalous and strange position of foreign nations towards us—provisions which stir up all that there is of interest on the one side, of conscience on the other, and of hatred in both, and which bring us as a nation into constant collision with the law, the government, and the providence of God.

Those provisions are: 1. That slaves considered mainly as property, shall constitute a basis of representation in Congress in the proportion of three-fifths of their number; 2. That the power of the general government shall be employed in restoring fugitives from slavery; and, 3. That Congress has the power and the right to prohibit slavery in the Territories of the nation. This latter is an implied or assumed claim. A remark or two on each of these, will explain more particularly what I mean.

1. For the first of these: That the African race, held in slavery, shall be represented in Congress in the proportion of three-fifths of their number. This is not, indeed, a direct representation of the African race themselves, for in the Constitution they are not so far regarded as persons as to have the rights of citizens, and of course any right to be represented in Congress. The representation is based on the idea of proper-

ty ; to wit, that they are property, and that as property there may be an additional representation in Congress from the slave States.* This was one of the "compromises" of the Constitution, and the essential idea was, that in order to secure something like a just balance between the North and the South, persons only should be the basis of representation in the North ; persons and property, to wit, property in slaves, should be the basis of representation in the South.† This, according to the ratio of representation now in Congress, would give to the South, on the basis of property, about twenty additional members in Congress. If the property idea, so unjust, were laid out of view; if those of African descent at the South were treated as they are at the North, and as on every just principle they should be; if the same principle were adopted in the slave States as in the free States, that, in the words of the Constitution, "Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included in this Union, according to their respective numbers;" if all who are held in slavery were treated in this respect as persons and not as property, then the South would be entitled to an additional representation in Congress, in proportion to the two-fifths of all who are now held in bondage, and in no way represented in Congress. On every principle of justice and equity, this should be done, and this is undoubtedly a case, and so far as I can see, the only case in which a palpable wrong has been done to the South in the Constitution. Of this, however, they have not complained, and could not complain, without renouncing what they regard as essential in their institution, the right of property in men.

2. The second of the provisions in the Constitution in regard to the relation of the General Government to slavery to which I have referred, is that by which fugitives from slavery are to be restored to their masters. The article in itself as

† "In settling the ratio of representation, another difficulty arose respecting the slaves, who form so large a portion of the inhabitants of some of the States. To compute them among the number represented, would be giving them an importance to which their character did not entitle them; ....to omit them altogether in the computation, would be to reduce the influence of the Southern States, in a manner to which they would never consent. As a medium between these, it was agreed that five slaves should be accounted as three citizens, in arranging the representation, and the apportionment computed accordingly. To counterbalance, in some degree, this concession to the Southern States, direct taxes are to be apportioned by the same rule as representation; so that the same cause which increases their influence in the national Legislature, subjects them to the necessity of making larger contributions to the national treasury, when that mode of taxation is resorted to.—BAYARD ON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, pp. 49, 50.

* "It is only under the pretext that the laws have transformed the negroes into subjects of property, that a place is assigned them in the computation of numbers; and it is admitted, that if the laws were to restore the rights which have been taken away, the negroes could no longer be refused an equal share of representation with the other inhabitants."—Mr. Madison, in the FEDERALIST, No. LIV.

originally adopted, and as it stands in the Constitution, is merely that "No person held to service or labor in one State under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor; but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor is due"—that is, that their return or restoration shall not be prevented or hindered by any laws in the respective States on the subject; or, in other words, that the masters shall have the power and right to reclaim them without any interference on the part of another State to prevent it; of course always implying that the claim shall be fairly made out. This simple provision, bad enough in itself, has been perverted and abused by being made the foundation of the most odious and iniquitous law perhaps ever enacted in any Christian conntry, by which the whole power of the General Government is pledged to the return of such fugitives; by which it is made the duty of every man to render aid in such a return; by which fine and imprisonment may be the penalty in any case of refusing to render such aid, or for assisting a fellow-man to escape from bondage, and to become a freeman—that is for refusing, in a Christian country, to violate what he may conscientiously believe to be an explicit law of God on the subject: "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee."* This law has been, indeed, pronounced on high authority—the highest in the land—to be constitutional; that is, not in fact a violation of the Constitution, but still, it has never been shown that a milder law, embracing all that was fairly implied in the constitutional provision, would not also be constitutional; in other words, that a law might not have been so framed that, while it maintained all that is required by the letter of the Constitution, it would not have required free citizens to do what would be a violation of their consciences, a law which would have been less palpably a violation of the law of God. More than any other one enactment—more than any other one cause—this law, in the form in which it exists, has been the cause of the alienation of the North from the South.

3. The other form of jurisdiction of the General Government on the subject of slavery, is the power claimed for Congress, and exercised by Congress, of excluding slavery by law from the Territories of the Nation. This power, not expressly granted in the Constitution, and not necessarily implied in the general provision that, "Congress shall have power to dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the Territory or other property belonging to the United States." (Art. IV. Section iii. 2,) has been claimed at the North; has been denied at the South; was exercised by Congress, with

* Deut. 23:15. So, also, Isa. 16:4: "Let mine outcasts dwell with thee; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler."

scarcely a dissenting voice, in the case of the Territory Northwest of the Ohio ceded by Virginia; was implied in the Missouri compromise; and was among the immediate causes of the trouble which led to this unhappy war. And yet, notwithstanding all these acts and decisions of so high authority, it may yet appear that it is a power which Congress never had; which it was never contemplated it should have under the Constitution; and which is fundamentally erroneous in regard to all just principles of legislation. The power to prohibit slavery may imply the power to ordain or establish it; and if Congress has this power in one respect, it would be difficult to show why it has it not in the other. Slavery is, in all cases, the mere creation of the laws: the laws of war; the laws of rapine; the laws of crime; the laws of complexion or race—or laws founded on those things. It does not exist by nature. It is not founded on any natural rights. It does not go anywhere by any natural right, or by any natural law. It is always the creation of law—of local or municipal law; and in all places where it is not ordained, or made such by law, MAN IS AND SHOULD BE FREE. Such are now understood to be settled and admitted principles; and as in the "Territories" Congress alone has power to make laws, or to "legislate," and as Congress has no power to make men slaves, or to institute slavery, so it follows that all the inhabitants of the Territories are free as long as they remain Territories; free, that is, until the people acting for themselves shall ordain otherwise. The right to prohibit slavery must go with the power to enact or ordain it; and Congress has neither. It is for the people alone to determine this; but whether when so determined, any new State shall be admitted into the Union, is another question. If so admitted, the matter is and should be with them alone.

These are the provisions in the Constitution, expressed or implied; provisions claimed, denied, perverted, abused, which have been the source of all our national woes.

But what is the effect of these provisions in the Constitution? What is there that should make it desirable that they should be changed?

The first of these questions now claims attention. The other will be answered in the other specifications which I have yet to suggest.

The effects are obvious:—the evils are palpable, at home; abroad.

AT HOME. Recognizing, as the Constitution is supposed to do, the right of the General Government to interfere in the matter at all; the fact that slavery as property is represented in the General Government; the right and the duty of the General Government to employ its powers, civil, military, and naval, if necessary, in restoring fugitive slaves; the right of the General Government to legislate on the subject of slavery

in the Territories, the effects are obvious. The Constitution seems to be the defender of slavery. The South is clamorous for the interposition of that power in its behalf. It is jealous, and properly so, of any measures that would divide, abridge, or diminish the exercise of the power of the General Government in defending, extending, and perpetuating the Institution. It claims, and fairly too, that the power of the nation, as expressly prescribed, shall be exerted to the full extent conceded in the Constitution; it demands that all that is vague and undefined shall be determined in a manner not against the interests of the Slave Power.

The North, too, feels, and justly, that under this arrangement of the Constitution, it has interests and responsibilities of a most grave and momentous character in the matter. It is not so much the interest of the tariff, of commerce, and of manufactures—of cotton, tobacco, and sugar—it is the interest springing from conscience and from national responsibility. Just so far as the subject pertains to the National Government, and just so far as the North constitutes a part of the nation, so far, under the Constitution, the North has an interest in it; so far, it has a right to discuss it; so far, it has a right to prevent any aggressions which the slave power might make; so far, it has a right, in common with the other portions of the country, to deal with it, under the limits of the Constitution, as it has to deal with the army and the navy—with the public lands, the postal arrangements, and the Customs. It is not a meddlesome interference with "domestic" institutions; with what does not pertain to us, when, as far as it is recognized and sustained by the National Government, it becomes a subject for examination and discussion. We interfere with no man's rights; we invade no man's prerogatives; we do nothing in violation of any rights of States, when, as long, and as far as it is a National Institution, or is sustained by the National Government, we examine freely the whole subject of slavery. And so long as the arrangement exists; so long as it is incorporated into the National Constitution, there will be two great parties—the one uniting with the South, and from pretended or real love of the Constitution, or of the love of power, urging the demands of slavery; the other based on opposition to the idea that the National Government is to be governed by slavery, to submit to its control and demands, to extend it, or to do anything to perpetuate it—a party always necessarily advancing toward the idea that the National Government has the power to abolish it, and should do it. To a large part of a free people, also, and especially a people in any degree under the dominion of conscience, it is a source of constant irritation that by a fair interpretation of their own acts in legislation, and by arrangements which are claimed to exist in the very Constitution, they are compelled to approve of measures which go to sustain an institution which they re-

gard as a direct violation of all the principles of humanity, and of the law of God.

ABROAD. It is not to be wondered at that our institutions have never been well understood abroad. To say nothing of a very prevailing ignorance in the older nations of Europe on all subjects, these institutions are, in some respects, so complicated, they seem, in the relations of the General Government and the several States, to come so much into collision; they are so unlike all which exists in the Old World, that we are not to wonder at the fact that they are not understood. Especially is this true in regard to slavery. That many of the people of foreign lands have great pleasure in maligning and misrepresenting us, and in hailing any indication of the downfall of the Republic, is undoubtedly true; and that much that is said on our position now, and much of the sympathy shown for the South, by those who have claimed to be pre-eminently the friends of liberty and the enemies of slavery, proceeds from this cause, no one will venture to deny.

But there are honest minds abroad, and there may be minds there not inimical to our country, and which are in fact drawn toward us by the strong ties of consanguinity and religion, which are filled with deep perplexity on the subject, and with the deeper perplexity because they are opposed to slavery, and because they sincerely desire to see the great principles of the British Constitution as expounded by Lord Mansfield, and as acted out in the emancipation secured by Clarkson and Wilberforce, extended over the world. On the one hand they see, or think they see, that the Constitution of this country is pledged to the support of slavery; they see that slavery is recognized in the representation in Congress; they see such protection in the Fugitive Slave Law; they think they see it in the Dred Scott Decision; they see it, or think they see it, even in the President's Proclamation; they see it, or think they see it, in the purposes of one of the great political parties of the nation now rising again into power; and they think they see that the triumph of the national arms—the suppression of the Rebellion—the restoration of the Union as it was, will carry with it all those arrangements by which the power of the nation was pledged to the defense of the institution. On the other hand, they think they see in the success of the confederate government, as circumstances must and will exist, the prospect of the speedy destruction of the system. Well as they know—for they can not but know—the avowed principle on which that confederacy is founded—slavery—avowed slavery—yet they see, or think they see, that, hemmed in as it would be, surrounded on every side by free States; with no power to reclaim fugitive slaves; with a border of some two thousand miles with nothing but imaginary lines, or creeks and rivers easily crossed, there could be no security for slavery; that the value of a slave

on that border would soon diminish to nothing, that there is no such attachment to slavery among slaves themselves as to keep them from availing themselves of the facilities of freedom; and that slavery must, therefore, soon come to an end. On the one hand, they see, or think they see, nothing but that which aims at its perpetuity; on the other, while they see that it is the avowed purpose to sustain it, they imagine that they see that which in the nature of things must at no distant period lead to its abolition.* I confess that it seems to me that an intelligent foreigner—a true friend of human freedom—might be much perplexed on this subject; and that, with all that is justly to be said and lamented in regard to the bad spirit manifested abroad, it is possible for a true lover of our country, in its best interests, to look inquiringly, if not favorably on the efforts of the Southern Confederacy, because he might suppose that he saw in that the only hope of the speedy removal of that great curse from our land and from the world.

However this may be, and however the expression of this thought as coming from this pulpit may be received and regarded, yet there is—there can be no doubt of the fact, that the complicity of the National Government with slavery may be, and is, one great cause among good men abroad of the want of sympathy in the efforts of the National Government to put down this dreadful rebellion. We shall stand upright before the world; we shall meet the demands of human nature in this age; we shall secure the entire sympathy of the lovers of freedom every where; I may say that we shall secure the perfect sympathy towards us of Russia, France, Germany, England, Scotland, Ireland, Italy, too—yea, Austria, it may be, only when with the clear note of freedom, with a manly and distinct tone, with an unambiguous utterance of the national conviction, and not as a mere military necessity, we shall repeat again before the world our solemn declaration, that "all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"—when we shall proclaim that the National Government is separated from slavery; that slavery is not represented in it as property; that the civil tribunals of the nation, its marshals, its military and naval forces, are not to be employed in arresting fugitives from bondage; that cit-

* "We would ask what has maintained, unmitigated, the horrors of slavery in spite of the public opinion of the world? The protection of the North."—EDINBURGH REVIEW, October, 1862, pp. 281, 282.

"We are convinced that the chances of mitigating and abolishing slavery in the Southern States will, if those States succeed in establishing themselves as a separate federation, be greater than such chances are if their conquest is effected by the arms of the North."—Ibid, p. 284.

"We can not desire to see the Union re-established as a mighty power for maintaining slavery as one of its institutions within, and protecting it against all the nations of the world without."—Ibid, p. 285.

[illegible] themselves, are not to be subjected to imprisonment [illegible] declining to aid in returning human beings, guilt[illegible] crime, to chains; when we shall announce to mankind, [illegible] uncertain sound, our belief as a nation, that "God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth;" that all have been redeemed by the same sacrifice on the cross; that every human being who has no other crime than that of 'having a skin not colored like that of other men' is entitled to liberty.

A fifth principle demanded by justice, and necessary for the permanent peace of the nation is, that representation in the National Government shall be uniformly at the North and the South on the basis of population and not of property. It is now wholly so at the North; it is partly so at the South. At the North, all, of all colors and conditions, except "Indians not taxed," constitute the basis in the apportionment of members in Congress. At the South, as we have seen all white persons, and three-fifths of all held as slaves, are the basis. Those three-fifths, moreover, are represented not as persons, but as property. Two-fifths of the four millions of the inhabitants of the South who are held in servitude, enter in no form into the idea of representation, and contribute in no way to constitute a Congress of the nation.

Ours is a Representative Government. But what is that? It is based on human beings—on persons; not on things—on chattels—on cattle. The essential idea in all just notions of representation is, that where in all the limits of the territory under the government, there is a human being, or one who has by nature the rights of a man, and who in any way contributes to constitute the nation as such, in its existence or greatness, there shall be a suitable recognition of that fact in the representation in the government; and that, in this respect, as he has by nature the rights of man, and as his life, liberty, and property may be affected by the government, he shall be regarded and treated as a human being, as part and parcel of the great confederation.

As matters are now, gross injustice is done to every part of the nation; gross injustice to ourselves in the eyes of the world. The North proclaims the principle in relation to their Southern brethren—a principle not recognized among themselves—that property may be in part the basis of representation, and they concede to Southern slaveholders what they claim, that their slaves shall be regarded as property, and this odious principle the nation proclaims abroad to the whole world: the North, thus with all its zeal for freedom; with all its professed abhorrence of slavery; with all its deep conviction that the African is a man like other men, yet declaring its willingness that the only representation which there shall be of a human being when a slave—the only recognition of him in

the halls of legislation, shall be as "property"—as property, and nothing else. Meantime, by a compromise unjust in principle, and inadequate in its influence, the North has been all the while deriving an undue advantage from this arrangement. In order to counterbalance the "concession to the Southern States" that their slaves might be represented in the proportion of three-fifths of their number as property, it was among the unhappy "compromises" of the Constitution, that "direct taxes should be apportioned by the same rule as representation." And as the Confederation in 1783 had made it a rule in taxation that the direct taxes should be apportioned on the principle that three-fifths of the slave population was to be reckoned, it was deemed just that the same principle should be adopted in settling the number of representatives.* But since direct taxes under our government occur at very distant intervals, and since the representation in Congress is constant, the North has been all the while reaping this advantage over the South, paying little in the way of compensation, and yet constantly enjoying the advantage in Congress derived from the imperfect and unequal representation in the South.

In the meantime, the South has been suffering this wrong—that, as now constituted, two fifths of the population, that is, of what are now four millions of its population, have been without any representation; in other words, under the ratio of representation, there has been a loss to them of ten, fifteen, or twenty members of Congress.

The true principle of representation would be, undoubtedly that no human beings should be represented as property; that the apportionment should be in accordance to the entire population as reported by the census-tables; that whatever may be the domestic relations of such persons, or whatever their condition, as sick or well, old or young, ignorant or learned, male or female, bond or free, white, copper-colored, black or semi-black, their existence as human beings—as a part of the nation—as having rights and interests as human beings to be protected—should be recogized in the government under which they live. In the carrying out of this principle, it is, of course, not necessary that all should be eligible to office, nor that all should vote; not that children, or slaves, or Indians should be admitted as law-makers of the land. At the North the people regulate this in their own way; so let them do at the South. As at the North, we do not choose that all persons shall be voters; and as we make distinctions—some of them arbitrary and unjust—yet all within our power—so let them do at the South. If they do not choose that the slaves shall vote, let it be so—let them treat them as we treat the colored population of the North; but in the name of humanity and of

* CURTIS'S HISTORY OF THE CONSTITUTION. Vol. ii. pp. 48, 160.

izens, free themselves, are not to be subjected to imprisonment or fines for declining to aid in returning human beings, guiltless of crime, to chains; when we shall announce to mankind, with no uncertain sound, our belief as a nation, that "God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth;" that all have been redeemed by the same sacrifice on the cross; that every human being who has no other crime than that of 'having a skin not colored like that of other men' is entitled to liberty.

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Executive has no such power; the third branch of the government—the Supreme Court—has no such power. Most foreigners, and especially those in the land from which we have derived our origin, and in a great measure our notions of liberty and government,* ignorantly, strangely, willfully fail to comprehend our Constitution on this subject; and they persevere in a determination not to be instructed. England, regarding her constitution as the perfection and sum of all wisdom, can never be made to understand why or how there should be a government without "Kings, Lords, and Commons;" or how there can be a Union of States which is not exactly like the union of the counties of Durham, York and Lancaster, or like England and Wales; or on some such principle as that which unites Scotland and Ireland to the crown, or how there can be possibly in another land a legislative body that is not formed after the exact "pattern" of the British Parliament. Hence thus far in eighty years we have never been able so to instruct them that they will see that an American Congress has not the same power over slavery in the States which the British Parliament has over a poor-house in the counties of Cornwall or Kent, or as the same Parliament had over slavery in the British West Indies. They will not yet understand that no authority whatever in regard to the direct emancipation of slaves has been given to the General Government of our nation; and it is, perhaps, now too late to hope that they ever will understand this. At home this is understood; and it is, therefore, understood, that any attempt to emancipate the slaves in this country by a mere act of the General Government, would be an usurpation of power never conceded, and equally at the North and the South, would destroy all hope of an adjustment of our difficulties. Besides, if this power were possessed by the General Government, and should be exercised by it, no pen could describe the evils which would follow from the immediate emancipation of four millions of people held in slavery; a people unused to freedom; most of whom are unable to read; a people unaccustomed to provide for themselves; having none of that economy which springs from the effort at self-support and the support of families; restrained now, and habitually mainly by terror and authority, and not by conscience; and with all the remembered wrongs committed against them and their fathers. Such an act of immediate emancipation would, in all human probability, deluge the land in blood and wrap it in flames. On the other hand, no tongue could describe the blessings which might flow from a wise system of gradual emancipation: where the end was distinctly contemplated, at no remote period, and where a system of training preparatory to it should be at once entered on, fitting those millions for freedom. Such an act would stand

* They understand us much better in France.

God, let them not be treated as chattels and things by a
principle; in the name of justice and of equity, let
North derive an advantage from an arrangement f
a principle which the people of the North no where
—the right of property in man; in the name of jus
equal rights, let the South be entitled to all the
tion which she could claim based on the Census—
numbers of human beings—men, women, and cl
the limits of the respective States.

A sixth thing:—The ultimate entire removal
our land is essential to permanent peace. Ou
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stitution, has shown that slavery has been, a
the only cause of alienation between the No
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would be immediately affected by it, is demanded by every principle of justice; by every thing in our nature which responds to the claim of what is reciprocal and right. It is not, indeed, as a matter of property; it need not recognize the right of property in human beings. The claim is founded rather on a principle of equity, as springing from the fact that when from any revolution in a nation's opinions and policy, a material change is to be produced in that which men have regarded as contributing to their prosperity, and of which the nation has been in any way a participant, every part of the nation, enriched by that which is to be of value no more, should bear its part of the loss and the burden. This may not be a legal claim. It may not be a claim which we place under the head of strict justice or right. But it is a claim which appeals to noble minds, and to noble hearts—that where there has been a common wrong, and when there is now to be a suffering party, that party should not be left to suffer alone. It is, therefore, on the strictest principles of moral equity that it has been proposed by the highest authority of this nation, that there shall be a fair system of compensation proposed for the States which are willing to inaugurate a system of gradual emancipation.

Nor will it be a "compromise" with slavery, nor an acknowledgment that slavery is in itself right, if the system proposed should be gradual. Provided that the end is contemplated; that the thing is to be done; that arrangements are made to do it, and to do it certainly; that there is no further defense of it, and no further arrangements to perpetuate and extend it; that the announcement goes forth to the world that it is the purpose of the nation that slavery shall cease, there can be no fair construction of such an act by which it can be inferred that the system is regarded as right. In such an act there would be no mercenary apology for slavery; nay, the purest benevolence may mingle in the act, though it is delayed, for the highest interest of the enslaved himself may demand that delay. New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, uttered no voice in favor of slavery, and made no compromise with it, when they inaugurated a system of gradual emancipation, and the deeply-rooted feeling of those States on the subject is proof that there was no lingering love of the system in the legislation which prompted to those acts.

Nor is it needful to any just views of emancipation that the freedmen under such a system, or under any system, should be expatriated, or removed by power to other lands. This is their native land, and they love it. The four millions of slaves in our country, excepting the few scores that may have been smuggled in contrary to the laws, were born here, and have as good a right here as any others, for the "boundaries of their habitation" have been fixed here by the great God. Beyond

most other men, too, the African loves his native soil. He has no disposition to leave the place where he has been reared, and where he has toiled—even for others; or even to leave those for whom he has toiled, if he is not treated with harshness and cruelty. In all that vast territory where the African has been compelled to toil, he would be a useful and needed laborer—not less useful, and not less needed, if, as a freeman, trained to freedom, he should be compensated as other men for his labor. Free labor in an African would be of more value to a country than slave labor, and on the vast cotton fields and rice plantations of the South it may always be true that the African performs a work which the white man could not endure. There, as freemen, let them live and labor, enjoying the avails of their labor, as other men do; represented in the National Government as a part of the population of the land; recognized and treated as made in the image of God. If they prefer, as freemen, to return to the land of their fathers' sepulchers, let us help them. To other lands now barbarous and savage, not driven there, not compelled to go, they might bear, as they would bear, juster notions of industry, and thrift, and liberty, and religion than now prevail there; and colonies voluntarily formed, and sustained by those who have oppressed them, might be the means of establishing there the institutions of civilization, religion, and the arts. Africa, blessed by the voluntary return of her sons, may yet forget the wrongs that have been done to her, and slavery may yet be numbered among the evils that have been overruled by divine Providence for the good of mankind.

A sixth principle, founded on such views as have now been presented, and claimed, it seems to me, with exact justice by the South, is, that slavery, as to its control, and as to all the laws regulating it, is to be left to the States as such, in all respects, absolutely and exclusively.

It is a settled principle in all just laws, now admitted every where, as already remarked, that slavery is only a creation of law; that it is not a condition of nature; and that where there is no law to make a man a slave, he is free. If it be by the laws of war, if it be by the laws of debt, if it be by laws pertaining to crime, then those laws, and those alone, define the existence, the locality, and the extent of the bondage or servitude of man. Just or unjust, then, the regulation is a municipal regulation, and the institution is a "domestic" institution, and as such it should be left to the States themselves. Like other local matters—things of domestic concern—it should be limited there, and when those bounds over which those domestic laws extend are passed, then any human being should breathe the air which other men breathe. Men at the South have claimed that we have no right to interfere with t l e r institution. As far as they and we have made them a national

concern, we have such a right, for so far it pertains to us as it does to them. But let it be so; let it be as they desire; let slavery be a local institution; let it be like other domestic arrangements; let it be wholly detached from all connection with the General Government; let all laws in relation to it outside of the respective States where it exists cease, and cease forever. Beyond that right which all men have to spread abroad light and truth; to diffuse their sentiments as they may; to publish books, to preach the Gospel, to persuade men to do what is right, and to avoid what is wrong, let there be no asserted right of interference, let there be no interference. Let it be placed on the same footing in this respect, as other matters that relate to the interests of the people of the land. It is rare that any of our interests, of persons, property, liberty, reputation, come in direct contact with the General Government. The ordinary course of affairs in which all are interested, is through the State considered in this respect as sovereign. "It is to the State Government that a man looks to protect his property, and secure his personal safety. It is the State Government which makes the laws that affect all his daily transactions, and it is the tribunals of the State Government which decide all the ordinary questions arising between man and man," Thus let slavery be. This is no unholy compromise of truth; it is no compromise at all, farther than when we seek to spread truth and learning, liberty and religion, in Turkey, or India, or Burmah, or China, or Italy by the Gospel, we go under an implied pledge not to attempt a direct interference with the laws—the local laws of these lands.

One other principle, as following from these views, remains to be stated. It is, that the entire subject of restoring fugitive slaves should be a matter of negotiation and arrangement between the States themselves. If as States independent in such matters, as in other local matters, they can enter into such negotiations and arrangements, well; if not, let not the power of the General Government be prostituted and profaned in the work of arresting men who pant for freedom; let not its judges "pollute the purity of the ermine" by remanding freemen to bondage; let not the army of the nation be employed to force their return at the point of the bayonet. Let no conscientious and peaceful citizen be required to engage, under severe pains and penalties, in reducing men and women to slavery. Let not the Government of the United States continue to place itself in this false position before the world, the only free government on earth, and yet the only government in all the nations that binds itself to do such a deed,

As the South claim that this is an institution of their own with which we have no right to intermeddle, let it be so. Let us not volunteer to interfere. If they can make an arrangement with Border States, equally independent in such subjects,

an arrangement for their reciprocal good, well; if not, let that be an end of the matter. If such States acquiesce in this; if they deem it just to others, or best for themselves, let them do it in their own way, and on their own responsibility, and let the fugitive-slave law be blotted from the statute-book of the nation forever and ever.

I know that I have been too long in this service; but neither you nor I will ever attend a Thanksgiving-service in such circumstances again. I have seldom, if ever, in my life, spoken with so much diffidence or distrust, in regard to the sentiments which I have felt it my duty to advance. That these sentiments will be regarded as practically wise by any considerable portion of those whom I have addressed, or adopted by the country, I am not sanguine in believing. That they are more just in describing the evil, than wise in proposing a remedy, perhaps I should be as readily disposed to grant, as any would to assert. But these things which I will now suggest in a few words, would follow if the nation should ever admit the propriety of these principles; and the prospect, however dim it may now be, that they will occur, should be a cause of thanksgiving, just in proportion as the eye of faith or patriotism can see any evidence that they will occur.

The nation would be one; there would be one flag, one system of laws, one religion; we should be one people.

The occasion for war, so far as it has sprung from slavery, and there has been no other occasion for war in this nation, would cease, and we might hope would cease forever.

The conscience of the North would be relieved, as having no complicity with slavery, and as being henceforward in no way responsible for it:—conscience, the most troublesome thing in a nation to manage, the most difficult to be subdued.

The rights of the South would be secured—secured in what they regard as their rights; secured in that of which they are deprived—a just and equal representation inCongress; secured as to any invasion from the North on their institutions; secured in what they choose to regard as valuable domestic arrangements; secured in regard to any direct interference with the arrangements which they think proper to cherish.

As a nation we should so stand before the world as to command the respect and the confidence of mankind. No longer could it be charged upon us that the National Government is the bulwark of slavery; that its legislation is adverse to freedom; that the power of the nation is pledged to perpetuate the system; that it is represented in the national councils; that the Government shocks the moral sentiments of mankind by its enactments, and turns away the sympathies of the friends of liberty, every where.

Slavery, too, would come to an end. Surrounded on every side by Free States, its value would diminish every where, and

the slave himself, with no disposition, as he has none, to leave the land of his birth, would become more valuable sooner or later by doing the work of a freeman, and by receiving the compensation of freedom. It may as well be known now as ever, it is now known that slavery can not long subsist in this country when the protection of the National Government is withdrawn from it, and that the hope of its ceasing is in the prospect that this national protection be withdrawn.

This will be a free land, rich, vast, prosperous, happy; a land where some one shall yet declare, in the language of Lord Mansfield, that "the air of America is too pure for a slave to breathe;" a land where every man that treads the soil shall be free.

I have one word more. The best intellect of the nation is yet to be called forth to settle the great principles involved in the present bloody strife. The highest talent of the nation has not been developed as yet in this war; the highest talent of a nation is never developed in war. There slumber yet in this land, some where, great mental powers yet undeveloped; statesmanlike abilities not yet unfolded; principles of lofty patriotism yet to be manifested aside from war; powers of far-reaching diplomacy, which will grasp these great questions, and the issue, in an honorable and perpetual peace, in new arrangements adapted to our country in these times, will place such names ever onward by the side of those of Franklin, and Madison, and Jay, and Hamilton, and Washington.

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

EMBELLISHING this number of THE NATIONAL PREACHER will be found an accurate likeness and finelly engraved portrait of the Rev. Albert Barnes, of Philadelphia, who for more than thirty-two years has been the laborious pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in that city. As a man, as a Christian minister, as a preacher of the Gospel, as a voluminous writer and expounder of the text of the sacred Scriptures, and extensively known as such all over this country and in foreign lands, a good portrait of him will be highly valued by his very numerous friends. Having known him for many years, we have sought to put on record, in permanent form, an accurate portrait of his face and form. Most of the portraits which we have seen have failed to express the exact lineaments of his features. This engraving has been made with great care from a photograph taken a few months since, and admitted to be

the best of all. The artist, Mr. Périne, has improved much upon the photograph, and brought out a full expression, and given it quite a lifelike resemblance to the original. A brief biographical sketch will add interest to the portrait.

Albert Barnes was born in the village of Rome, Oneida county, New York, December first, 1798. His father was a tanner, and Mr. Barnes remained in his father's family until he was seventeen years of age, employed with his father, while, in the meantime, he laid the basis of a solid education by a diligent application to general reading and study, and the pursuits of literature. At the age of twenty-two years, he graduated at Hamilton College, and in November, 1820, entered upon his theological studies at Princeton, New Jersey, where, after a three years' course, he remained one year more as a resident graduate.

In April, 1824, he was licensed to preach the Gospel, and on the twenty-fifth of the following February he was ordained and installed pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Morristown, New Jersey. He entered upon the work of the ministry as a pastor with untiring zeal and fidelity, and continued his successful labors at Morristown during five years, when, much to the regret of the people of his charge, he received a call to become the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, which he accepted, and entered upon the duties of his new field of most responsible labors June 25th, 1830 where he has remained ever since. The ecclesiastical history of Mr. Barnes is, in some respects at least, one of the most interesting and instructive in modern times. But amid most abundant labors among the people of his charge, and untiring diligence in expositions of the Scriptures, he has been a burning and a shining light in the churches of the land. By a systematic disposition of his time, and with clock-like promptitude in the assignment of his varied duties and studies, Mr. Barnes has accomplished an amount of intellectual labor such as few men, if any in this age, have achieved. His life, from his first entrance on the pastorate at Morristown, has been one of great activity and laborious toil. The labor which he has performed —a large part of it in the early morn while other men were asleep—would seem to be enough to crush any constitution but one of iron. We believe the three large volumes of his commentary on the Prophet Isaiah, published in 1838, were chiefly written in the early morning, while many were asleep. The same general course of the early morning study was pursued in after-years, which has resulted in the long series of volumes of commentaries on the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which have had for many years an increasing and still wider circulation every year as the time moves on. Besides these, Mr. Barnes has published many volumes of essays, reviews, sermons, addresses, etc., of a practical or dogmatic character,

His *Village Sermons*, selected and published for practical use, are among the most interesting and instructive of any in the language.

These incessant and arduous labors a few years since seriously impaired his eye-sight, which led him to visit Europe to obtain the best medical advice in that country. Happily his eye-sight has been so far improved that his labors have been continued till now.

His commentaries alone, in some eighteen or twenty volumes, are a monument of untiring industry. They have been extensively republished in England, and to some extent in other languages. They have been used in families, in Sabbath-schools, and Bible-classes, and entered into a wider circulation perhaps than any series of the kind in this age. More than half a million of these volumes had been printed and sold some years since. The number now can hardly be less than three-quarters of a million. To have provided such an amount of sacred reading for such an age as this, is to have exerted an influence on the human mind and destiny rarely paralleled. As a preacher, Mr. Barnes belongs to the first rank of American divines. But he is too well and widely known to need a more extended sketch of his life and labors, which are embodied in his numerous works, and his eminent history as a pastor and preacher,

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SERMON II.*

BY THE REV. EZRA H. GILLETTE,

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HARLEM, N. Y.

A TRIBUTE OF NATIONAL THANKSGIVING.

"Offer to God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows to the Most High; and call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver . . ."—PSALM, 50; 14.

AMID the clash of arms and the roar of cannon, we are called upon to give devout thanksgiving to God. There are bleeding hearts—there are sad homes around us—and for many the tones of praise and gladness must have a sound discordant to their feelings; and yet, even for them, there is occasion for thanksgiving. Our blessings wear, perhaps, a brighter hue when seen on the dark background of public calamity and civil war. The contrast of the peaceful earth, and the clear, quiet

* Preached on Thanksgiving-Day, November 27, 1862, in the church of the author.

the best of all. The artist, Mr. Perin upon the photograph, and brought ou given it quite a lifelike resemblance biographical sketch will add interest

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In April, 1824, he was li the twenty-fifth of the foll installed pastor of the P New Jersey. He entere pastor with untiring ze cessful labors at Morris the regret of the peopl come the pastor of the phia, which he accep new field of most ex has remained ever Barnes is, in some and instructive in labors among the in expositions of shining light in position of his assignment of accomplished if any in this trance on th activity and —a large p asleep—w one of iro mentary written same g in af of

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abide by the law, and we recognize in the law the
we have for ourselves, our children, and for all that
me after us. The shout, the huzza, that welcomes the
al flag, as it is unfurled, indicates a brave and noble en-
iasm; and when that flag, wherever borne, shall carry with
liberation from fear, and terror, and stripes, and imprison-
ment, and bondage, so that it shall be hailed as a deliverer, as
giving present and enduring security, the very prospect, the
bare possibility, stirs the soul within us, and thrills our hearts
beyond the note of drum or trumpet, or martial strain.

And who can forget at a time like this, the generous devotion with which our brave soldiers have gone forth at their country's call, to fight, or to fall in its defense? The sight is a stirring and a noble one. Even in this hour of calamity it almost makes us forget our grief. Well may we cherish the memory of the fallen, who have fallen for us, and well may we cheer those that survive that have gone forth to fight our battles. How came they by this enthusiasm? How is it that they love their country and will fight for it to the death? It comes from influences and institutions that have trained them to be what they are, and for which we are indebted to God. Thanks be to his name that he has given us such men to lay their lives a willing sacrifice on the alter of their country.

And what shall we say of the fathers and mothers that have surrendered the pride of their dwellings and beloved of their hearts, at their country's call?—that have responded a "God bless you," "God speed you," as with youthful enthusiasm they have exclaimed: "Kiss me, mother, and let me go"? It was brave—it was noble to do it. We owe them a lasting debt —nay, rather we owe it to God, who kindled their hearts to such self-denying enthusiasm, and taught them to render the sacrifice.

And amid the gloom of civil strife—amid all the dire scenes

of the great tragedy, there are some things on which we fondly linger, and which shine forth brightly, grandly, from the gloom. I think of some that have fallen and have left behind them a noble testimony that has been spread abroad, and held up to their country's gaze. I seem to stand by the death-bed of one of the bravest of the brave—Mitchel—the Astronomer, the general, the man, the Christian, and I hear him whispering—for he is fast sinking—in low tones: "It is a blessed thing to have a Christian hope in a time like this." Thanks be to God for such a testimony from a soldier's lips. And I might—if time would allow—cite other examples of the power of faith which gleams forth with cheering light in this night-time of sorrow and a nation's peril, which should stir our hearts to gratitude to Him who writes his autograph of love in rainbow letters on the darkest cloud.

And who does not see that the lessons we are learning, if we have not already learned them, are worth more than the millions they cost, or the blood that furnishes ink to write them? When Dr. Alison, father of Alison the historian, preached a half century and more ago, his thanksgiving sermon for Nelson's naval victory of Trafalgar, he said: "There is something in the opulence of nations which has been found hitherto hostile to national virtue; and amid the long sunshine of prosperity there is a malignant spirit of selfish interest apt to arise, which withers the proudest promises of national greatness." It is only too true. Years ago wise men foresaw, foretold, and feared the coming storm. We had become prosperous and proud. We had all the self-exaltation and self-glorification of the King of Babylon, when he said: "Is not this great Babylon that I have builded?" We were great and wanted to be greater. We glorified the Monroe doctrine. We talked of manifest destiny. We were fast coming, as a nation, to feel that we could push the bounds of right to the limits of our power. We were preparing to swallow nations at a meal, and surfeit, like the anaconda, on living victims, heedless of the lethargy sure to follow, or the demoralization that was inevitable. We forgot that we had enough to do to train, and educate, and Christianize our own masses, and that this was a more direct road to enduring and healthful strength and prosperity, than the road by which armies march. We were overlooking the poor, the ignorant, the outcast, the degraded and oppressed. We were deaf to the cry of wrong, and blind to the sight of vice, immorality and injustice. Millions in our great cities—some rioting in wealth, others rotting in poverty, were sinking in godlessness, and we heeded it not. We took the stature of a man by the measure of his vote. Faction and party spirit were growing insensible to right and duty, as well as consequences. We were on the high road to ruin—the very road by which Assyria and Babylon and Rome marched to perdition, and we scarcely perceived it.

I will not say that our course even now has been fully arrested, but it has been checked. We hear no more of manifest destiny; we cease to talk of the Monroe doctrine. The sanitary, moral, and religious wants of our soldiers have forced us to think of them as men, and of our duties to them. We are confronted with the dangers, and hardships, and hazards, to which they are exposed, and a noble Christian humanity has been evoked, which has done something for their relief. We are coming to see that we have uses for money besides hoarding and squandering, and that wasteful luxury is alike unpatriotic and unchristian.

Another important lesson is taught us, as by the force of circumstances we are led to ask—how was this war initiated, or why does it linger indecisive? The answer is one to humble us, and to bring the consciousness of guilt home to us all. The nest-egg of treason in the National Capitol never could have been hatched but by the brooding influences of moral corruption. Had every loyal State sent to Washington men who should represent truth, and principle, and Christianity, secession would never have dared to look them in the face. Its plots and conspiracies became effective only by the guilty complicicity of a corruption that could be bribed.

And what has staid the march of our armies? Has not corruption leaked through every crevice and palsied the energies of the nation? Has not God been teaching us—"not by might nor by power, but by his Spirit"—the battle must be won? We must be honest and true; we must be strong in uprightness and integrity if we would finally triumph.

There are some men who suggest this, and others who suggest that, and who, with intensity of vision, can see but one thing, and think of but one, forgetful that sin is a Proteus, and is never to be crushed by destroying only one of its forms. We will not judge such harshly, for they may mean well; but when the Upas tree of sin is to be cut down, it is poor policy to fasten an axe to the end of a long pole, and, at arm's length, strike tediously and laboriously at some single branch, replaced, while it is hacked off, by another shoot that gives evidence of good pruning. The divine method is to lay the axe at the root of the tree, to smite down the trunk and all its branches with it.

The good sense of the farmer or the gardener teaches us an important lesson. He goes into his field and finds it covered with various weeds, but instead of calling on the aid of botanical science to classify them, and studying which is most obnoxious, and then going over the field to cut down that particular one, overlooking all others, he takes his hoe and clears the ground as he goes forward. That's what we should do. We should use the Gospel hoe to cut down every weed, just as it comes in our way, and clear off every thing that checks the growth of the standing corn in the garden of the Lord.

When we think of the iniquity of the world, it seems to us a kind of ocean, and we cannot hope to check its rising tides by sweeping them back at one particular point. We must begin by invoking the aid of the God of storm and tide, and we must be prepared to meet every overflow of sin at every point. Else while we stem the current of evil, and forget others, they will flow around us, and pour in upon our rear, and defeat all that we have accomplished. There is no specific for the world's sin, except Gospel reform, that meets every phase of it. This strikes at the root, instead of lopping the branches. It cuts up every weed, instead of wandering about to exterminate a particular evil. What we want, what the nation wants, is better men—men who will do that which is just and right, and without these it is vain to rely on specifics, or pour out vengeance on particular forms of sin to the neglect of others.

And who does not read—as the mantling clouds of smoke lift from our battle-fields—who does not read clearer and more clear in the light of blazing cannon, lettering their frowning folds, the admonition addressed to us as a nation, to put away every form of sin, and fortify ourselves anew by the manly virtues and the Christian morals of our fathers? What we want, to subdue the rebellion, is not more money, or braver soldiers, or larger armies, but truer hearts, and loftier principle, and purer virtue, and heaven-taught minds to guide and inspire us. Who does not feel this in such a time as this? God in his providence is writing it out before our eyes.

On the evening of a Fourth of July, when the fireworks have been kindled, you have seen streaming through the smoke and darkness, in letters of flame, some national motto, some memorable name or date—WASHINGTON—or, 1776. How it thrilled your heart as it met your eye, and with a proud smile you thought of the fiery lesson it read out to the eyes of thousands of spectators. But who, in these grander fireworks of civil war, in these pyrotechnics of Providence, amid the boom of cannon and the tramp of the fire-wrapt columns, does not see letter after letter pre-arranged by a superintending hand, coming forth to view, and gleaming through the smoke and dust of the fray, till he reads, "Righteousness exalteth a nation," and spells out what made the King of Babylon to tremble, that there is a God that ruleth in heaven and doeth his will among the inhabitants of the earth.

Thanks to his name for the kindly-meant, though stern, admonition. We need it—we need it above every thing else. Our sins are our curse, and our strength and wisdom are to forsake them. What we want is to make our people better. We want more power in the pulpit, more vigor in our Sunday-schools, more efficient means to reach the masses, more active measures to circulate the Bible and the tract, and disseminate

every form of religious truth. This is our proper work—which may God deign to bless.

Nor will we forget, at a time like this, the cheering assurance of the text: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Thanks be to Him whose love gave utterance to the promise, and whose faithfulness will fulfill it. Our help is in God. He can effect our deliverance in ways beyond our thought. He can do it, and he will do it, if we call upon him for help in the proper spirit.

And yet it may not be in such ways as we might imagine. His ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. But we will at least praise him for the cheering hopes which his words inspire.

We will thank him also that we can trust all our imperiled interests in his hands. It is vain for us to attempt even to foretell the future. It may be that this nation is to be rent asunder. May God avert it! But one thing we all feel, that henceforth rebellion can never expect impunity, and that the stern authority of established government must not be trifled with; and one thing we devoutly hope, that the causes of the war, be they found where they may—in angry passions or selfish interests—shall be annihilated. If it is unsafe for this republic to hold in its bosom a sectional power, cemented into a conspiracy by the profits of the unpaid labor of millions of bondmen, and the war should result in its annihilation, I would not willingly believe that there is a loyal heart between the two oceans that would not respond: "God's will be done." If what a Southern statesman has declared—in the face of the world and in insult to the light of the nineteenth century—to be the corner-stone of the Confederacy, should be ground to powder, few, I trust, would be envious of the martyrdom to be gained by thrusting themselves beneath the rafters of the falling fabric; and if, as the result of the war, the flag which we all have loved, which we love still, and shall love till we die, shall come forth stainless from the strife, all its stars undimmed, the symbols of our future to endure like the stars in heaven, while the stripes shall be emblems only of a past, stripes and retribution for rebellion, and this flag shall float in the light and breeze over a broad, peaceful, happy, free, regeneratedl and, then might we all be ready, with true Methodist fervor to exclaim: "Hallelujah, Amen!"

The issue is in God's hand. It is well that it is so. Thanks be to his name for it! It shall tend to his glory, though it humble us. Prostrate in the dust, under the stroke of his judgments, we will yet exalt his name. We cannot see how the rending asunder of this glorious heritage can work out results other than disastrous; but we have not God's foresight. We turn our eyes away from such an issue, and invoke an intervention that can baffle all the intervention of [illegible]ions,

the false diplomacy of the world. We can not help feeling that God has great designs in reserve for us. All our past speaks the guiding hand of his providence. Our fathers were trained under his stern tuition. Truer men never lived; braver men never fought; devouter men than many of them never prayed; wiser men never constructed a civilized and Christian State. Our hills and valleys are fragrant with memories of their sufferings and their valor. Where is the dwellings in city or forest, or the sea-shore or the mountain, that has not echoed to the name of Washington? Where is the hamlet, the village, the sheltered nook, that has not been visited by breezes that have swept over Saratoga or Yorktown—that have eddied about the shaft of Bunker Hill or the grave of Mount Vernon? Where has knowledge been more widely or freely diffused? Where has religion ever won more signal triumphs? Our lakes and rivers, do they seem designed to mock the littleness of the people that shall inherit them? Our Alleghanies and Andes, were they reared to pour scorn on the insignificance of the pigmies that should crawl at their base? Our broad prairies and teeming acres, do they seem designed to invite the culture of a despot's minions? It does not seem as if God suffered the iron wire to flash his lightnings across a continent, from ocean to ocean, just to show how many insignificant fragments of a great empire could be crowded within its span. Niagara's thunder was not meant to charm insects, nor the broad wealth of the Mississippi Valley as slime for worms to crawl in. Every thing about us, from the soil we tread to the stars that light us—from our early conflicts with savages to our present conflicts with traitors—from our forests to our mountains—from our log-cabins that tell of pioneer energy, to our cities that garner the wealth of a world-wide commerce—from the "dim aisles of the deep wood," their green arches echoeing with the forest hymn, to the pillared temple built for the worship of generations to come—every thing proclaims that this land—set by God's hand in the framework of two oceans, and hung on the broad side of the world, and already with clouds of witnesses—from the firmament of its history gazing down in scorn for meanness, and applause for virtue—was meant for men—men, true, faithful, large-souled, liberal, Christian—whose policy could span the world, and take into view the ages, and labor for the whole human race.

"Our country, 'tis a glorious land,
With broad arms stretched from shore to shore;
The proud Pacific chafes her strand;
She hears the dark Atlantic roar;
And nurtured on her ample breast,
How many a goodly prospect lies,
In nature's wildest grandeur drest,
Enameled with the loveliest dies!

"Great God, we thank thee for this home—
This bounteous birthland of the free,
Where wanderers from afar may come
And breathe the air of liberty!
Still may her flowers untrampled spring,
Her harvests wave, her cities rise,
And yet, till time shall fold his wing,
Remain earth's loveliest paradise."

The ship of state is in the tempest now, but she yet minds the helm, and we can not believe that she is to be a wreck. She is a noble vessel. Her keel was New England elm; her knees were Puritan oak; she was bolted with Pennsylvania iron. and in her construction, Yankee and Huguenot, English and Scotch, Dutch and Irish, wrought side by side, and though decked with Georgia pine and smeared with Carolina pitch, she had a sound hull, and through the Hellgate of Revolution, God gave her a Washington for a pilot. Out upon the open sea, she has fallen into weaker hands and the storm is upon her; but she is staunch yet and her crew are loyal, and though the storm has rent her sails and splintered her spars, and thrown her for a time almost on her beam-ends, she is righting herself now, and meets the huge waves, as they come, with a brave, bold front, bating no jot of heart or hope. Shall she be surrendered to the bands of pirates? Shall "the harpies of the shore" "pluck the eagle of the sea?"

"Oh! better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave.
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave.
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every thread-bare sail,
And give her to the God of storms,
The lightning and the gale."

But the God of storms will accept the consecration, and become Himself her pilot; then shall she be safe, and over the waves of time's ocean shall she bear a rich and precious cargo to bless the world.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

For The Prayer Meeting.

The Christian in an Eddy.

HAVE you not sometimes seen a fragment of wood or some floating matter drifting along on the bosom of the current, till, at length, borne within the circuit of an eddy along the shore, its course has been arrested, and there it has remained, circling with the waters, but, nevertheless, a prisoner? It is thus sometimes that the onward course of the Christian is arrested. He drifts aside from the direct course of the stream on which he has embarked, and by which he would reach his destination. He falls into some, if not frivolous and irreligious, yet vain and worldly association, and it proves an eddy by which, although he moves till, and perhaps never is at rest, e is still held a prisoner. He is, deed, yet afloat. He has not altother parted from Christian comunion, but he has been drawn aside m the line of progress, and it may a long time before he is so far ught back to a sense of his condi- as to struggle back to his former ition.

here are, indeed, dangerous ed- on every side of us—worldly ciations, that seem to border on Church, and yet which serve to the soul under the spell of their ction, and keep it from that ess in which its very life con- If not absolutely, yet rela- it loses ground. It no longer the powerful impulse under it once moved. It is with- from the great current of an influence, and becomes, in e *drift-wood* of the Church! little value is it then! How ffective influence reduced? e its powers and sympathies ctions confined within the circle where they are made to revolve in the round of folly, or to conform to the associations that make them its instruments.

For The Prayer Meeting.

The Faithful Saying.

PAUL thought the saying, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners worthy of all acceptation. Why should it not be? It is heaven's message of life and hope to a lost world! Let the famished refuse bread, and the naked clothing; let the drowning man push back the arm stretched for his rescue, and the prisoner in his grated cell listen with apathy to the announcement that he is restored to freedom; but, above all, let not a sinner, with the sentence of death within him, and the curse of a broken law, and the wrath of an offended God upon him, decline to accept the message which tells him of a Saviour, wounded for his transgressions, and bruised for his iniquities, suffering to redeem him, dying that he may live.

What think *you* of the saying? Is it indeed worthy of all acceptation? Is it not worthy of yours? Is it not what every sinner needs? Is it not that without which the blackness of guilt and despair must hang forever over his path? Will you refuse to open your heart to the glorious message? Will you, by rejecting it, count yourself unworthy of eternal life, and shut out the light, hope and consolation which it affords? What is this saying but the very radiance of the Son of Righteousness? And will any man love darkness rather than light? His preference is his condemnation. He flies from his own salvation.

What would you think of a man that turned away from the light of

day, the light that wakes the world from torpor, that inspires the morning song of the bird, that paints field and flower, and leaf with their own hues, that drives the darkness before it, and unvails the face of friendship, and cheers the laborer as he hurries to his daily task—what would you think of him, drawing back deeper into his cave, or retiring to his windowless closet, or shutting his eyes, as if against an unwelcome intruder? And yet the light of day is a feeble type of that more glorious light which beams upon us from the advent of Christ, as the Saviour of the world, and the folly of rejecting the one, fully symbolizes the folly of rejecting the other. But are there not those who flee away from this light, who wrap themselves about with the shadow of their guilty pleasure, who retire into the darkness of their self-blinded minds, and in the caverns of their own fancies, forget that the Son of Righteousness has ever dawned on our benighted world?

How is it with you? have you accepted this saying? or do you say, let all others accept it, but let me be excused? And why? If others need it, do not you? If Paul needed it, and welcomed it, and gloried in it, why not you? Are you not a sinner? Do you not need to be saved? Have you no guilt to be blotted out? Is there no danger that threatens you? Are the words, Flee from the wrath to come, adapted to all, but not to you? Care you not that Christ came to seek and save? Do you hear the coming of the great Deliverer heralded without emotion? Do you say, dare you say, This message, this saying, is nothing to me?

Surely, if it is addressed to any, it is addressed to you. If it is meant for any, it is meant for you. If it can bring hope and joy and peace to any, you should allow it to bring them to you. Accept it, heartily, truly, unconditionally, and you are saved. Take the truth into your soul, and as lost and ruined by your sin, put your sole trust in Him who came to save sinners, and yours will be a justifying, saving faith.

For The Prayer Meeting.

Improve Opportunities.

On how trivial a thing sometimes, to outward appearance, is the destiny of the soul made to depend! A word like "eternity" on the torn fragment of a leaf; a simple question like that addresed by a venerable Christian to one who became afterward one of the lights of the Ameriean pulpit—"Young man, when will you leave off your jesting with sacred things?" the perusal of a book which has either kindled some dormant passion, or waked to life a lethargic conscience; the momentary yielding to the lure of the tempter, which has entrapped a victim beyond the hope of release; the prayer of a good man overheard by a heedless ear, and carrying an arrow of conviction to a heedless heart; a chance attendance upon the sanctuary, where some single sentence has proved like a nail in a sure place—how often has something like this turned the scale of a soul's destiny for weal or for woe."

A vessel on the waves feels the gentlest pressure of the breeze that kisses its outspread sail. But there are times when the human heart is no less susceptible for good or evil. A mere breath will drift it from its course, so that it shall dash upon the rocks, or give it the impulse by means of which it makes a hair's-breadth escape: The danger is not alone in the storm and the tempest. A slight veering from the path of duty may lead to a lamentable result, and the gentlest influence of the spirit, yielded to by the soul, may prove its salvation. In our religious life there can be nothing insignificant. Whatever brings us, as it were, one hair's-breadth nearer the Saviour, or bears us backward, though it be ever so short a distance, has a bearing upon our immortal destiny. The sailor will not willingly yield one inch to the force of an adverse current, and he will not fail to catch the lightest breeze that can impel him onward.

From him we may take a lesson. Let no opportunity for spiritual improvement pass neglected. Whatever can wean the soul from earth,

and fix its affections on heaven; whatever can instruct or cheer, or sustain, whatever can impress the heart or lend strength to its hallowed purpose; whatever can be used to lift it up out of the darkness and bring it into the light of God; whatever can foster the Christian graces, or brace the soul up to manly, self-denying. Christian effort—avail yourself of it. If there is a leisure moment that you can snatch for holy meditation; if there is a scene of Christian communion where your heart can blend its sympathies, its supplications, or its praises with those of Christian brethren; if there is an hour of social prayer which you can reserve out of the malestrom of business; if there are truths heard from the pulpit or read from the Bible, the book, or the tract, which you can familiarize by an effort of memory or reflection; if there is an incident of life, or a dispensation of providence from which you may derive wisdom and instruction—avail yourself of these. The bee does not neglect the humblest flower. The great earth does not cotemn the meanest seed. The little fiber at the root of the giant oak takes up the minutest portion of the dew-drop that waters it; and he that would grow in grace, or arrive at the full stature of a perfect man in Christ, must learn not to neglect the humblest opportunities.

Selected for The Prayer Meeting.

The Christian's Triumph.

THESE three things—the embalming of the object lost to sense, in memory and hope; the consciousness of good ends subserved by its removal; the assurance of better things which can not be removed—are a sort of sacred tripod to the spirit, which no shock from earth or hell can overturn. They give ever a terrible strength, before which all pains of soul and body are harmless, and all tyrant inflictions defeated. In dungeons, thus sustained, she hath joy, which the brave Haxtoun declared to be above the enjoyment of life's loveliest places. Martyrs have become unconscious to the cruelest *torture*, and in a divine heat of bravery have rushed again to meet them. And in these quieter times, orphans and widows, and afflicted people of every name, take refuge thereon, and bear calamities with a magnanimity to which knowledge, and philosophy and sentiment are strangers; and seasons of affliction become pregnant with the greatest advantage; and they know the joy of grief, about which sentimental writers do but prate. One by one they resign the spirits of their dearest kindred into the hand of the Lord's tender mercy. One by one they deposit their earthly tabernacle in the silent tomb, and while the tears of nature follow the much-loved object, their spirits rise to heaven and hold communion with the spirit that is gone, and long for the happy day when they, also, being dismantled, shall join it in the realms of immortal bliss.—REV. EDWARD IRVING.

Selected for The Prayer Meeting.

Counsel to Youth.

DEVOTE your young years to God and a loving Saviour. The first fruits are to be offered to Him. The green ears of your youth are to be carried to his sanctuary. Think it not pity that the vain delights and sinful pleasures of youth should be lost—you shall but exchange them for spiritual delights, which are far more excellent, inward, and lasting. The joy of the Holy Ghost, the rejoicing of a good conscience, communion with God, the sense of his love, and the hope of heaven, are far better than the pleasures of sin, and will more than recompense your loss of youthful and carnal delights. And consider this seriously, that none have usually more comfort in their souls than those who are willing to lose their sinful comforts for God and their soul's sake.

Remember that you must give an account to God how you spend your youth, as well as for old age. Consider, as young as you are, how many years are already spent, and what account you are able to give to God of them. One day spent in sin is too much; and the sins of one hour de-

serve a hell. Younger than you are dead and gone. Let the thoughts of them remind you seriously of your own account. Your call to God's bar may be next. Are you ready? Suppose God should call you away suddenly, what sentence could you expect from him? Are you ready if the Bridegroom should now come? It will be no excuse at judgment, if you be found, in your sins, to say: *Lord, I was but young.* He that is old enough to sin, is old enough for hell. You can not make sure of God's love and an interest in Christ too soon. You can not secure your soul too soon.—Rev. John Mason, of England.

Selected for The Prayer-Meeting.

What is to be Done?

What is to be done? To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is the thing that is to be done. This is the specific; and not for guilt only, but also for corruption. You may think it too simple an affair for lauding you in so mighty a consummation. Make it a more strenuous affair, by putting your own puny efforts to the stretch of their uttermost activity, and you never will succeed. The Syrian thought it too simple an affair when asked to bathe in the waters of Jordon for his leprosy. Nevertheless, he did it, and his leprosy left him. You will see God in a new light, if you look to him as reflected from the glass of the offered mediatorship. If we can turn you from the hatred of God to the love of Him, this would be to regenerate you; and we ask you to look upon God as God in Christ, reconciling the world, and the change from hatred to love is accomplished. These dark clouds which have hitherto lowered upon you from the pavilion of his lofty residence, will forthwith be dissipated. You will then see that all-majestic as he is, and awfully as that majesty has been illustrated by the account that has been made for sin, yet there is a mercy, too, which shines forth in the midst of his other attributes, and *rejoices over them.* You will love the *God who first loved you*; and that unfailing promise, that He who gave His own Son, will also freely give us all things, shall so invite the prayers and the dependence of every believing soul, that the spirit given to those who ask it, will be given unto him; and he, gradually formed after the lost image of the Godhead, will become a new creature—meet for the inheritance of the saints in light; meet for the enjoyment of that Paradise, where sin and sorrow and suffering are unknown.—Dr. Chalmers.

For The Prayer-Meeting.

"The Rock Higher Than I."

Will any one tell me that there is indeed, no "Rock higher than I"—that there is nowhere a refuge to which in my weakness I may flee for strength, and in my exposure for security—no infinite love that will watch over me with a guardion providence—no almighty arms that can fold me, secure from every hazard? It may be good tidings to one who, by the misery of conscious guilt, and by forebodings of judgment to come, has been forced to look upon annihilation with complacency, and to welcome the thought that there is no judge of the whole earth. But to me it is the gospel of despair. I am thrown back upon my own blindness and weakness. I mine my way, mole-like, into the uncertain future. I snatch, like a drowning man, at straws that sink with me beneath the waves of time, and I nowhere discern the ark that can ride secure over the troubled billows, no rock that rises aloft over the spray of death.

If I have no Father in heaven, I am an orphan indeed. I am cast on the fatherhood of chance and accident. I can not blame him then

> "Who hail's thee, man, the creature of a day,
> Spouse of the worm and brother of the clay,
> Frail as a leaf in autumn's yellow bower.
> Dust in the wind, or new upon the flower,
> A friendless slave—a child without a sire,
> Whose transient breath and momentary fire
> Light to the grave his chance-created form,
> As ocean wrecks illuminate the storm.
> And when the gun's tremendous flash is o'er,
> No night and silence sink for evermore.

What if I am wise above others, or can gaze with cooler nerves upon inevitable calamity? What if, with

more than common art, I can dodge the arrows of misfortune? What if I can breast the waves with braver skill, or manlier stroke? I am only more eminent by a lingering doom. I sink an hour or a moment later, a more tardy, but not less certain victim.

Is this the consolation that is offered to me, to soothe my apprehension of guilt? Is this the offset for the sacrifice of hope here and hereafter, that I may have the insensibility of a worm or a clod?

I will not believe it. Even in its own apostacy human nature protests against the falsehood. The instincts of our dependence are too deeply rooted in us to be eradicated by the weak sophistries of error. The rolling thunders, making the earth reel beneath our feet, remind us of One above, who maketh the clouds his chariot, and rideth on the wings of the wind. The hardened wretch, bold in his impiety, trembles and sinks upon his knees, and cries out in agony and terror to the Being he has denied, when the arrows of the lightning blaze before his eyes, or the strokes of calamity unnerve his iron frame. I could believe in rays without a sun, in leaves without a tree, in streams without a fountain, in shadows without the sunlight, sooner than in man without a God. Every fiber of my frame — fearfully and wonderfully made—every instinct of my spirit, teaching, nay impelling me to look upward, every inference of my reason, tracking thought, incorporate in material form, back to the great Thinker and designer, testifies to "the Rock that is higher than I." If there is hope any where it must be found in Him. If there is help anywhere it must be sought in Him. The loftiest human intellect can not solve the problems I want solved. The strongest human arm can not shield me from the dangers I dread. The shrewdest human foresight cannot read for me to-morrow's page, or interpret the meaning of to-day; nor can all the arts of sophistry or logic provide rest for a soul tossed upon the waves of anxiety for sin and guilt. None of these lift me from my misery or effect my deliverance. In spite of all I must cry out: "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."

Selected for the Prayer-Meeting.

"The City of God."

TRULY it is a strange city: little and insignificant, and yet of an extent equal to that of the world in which we live; stretching from pole to pole. But it will one day be gathered together from the dispersion, and be seen in one spot in all its beauty and splendor. Every thing belonging to a city is found in the City of God. If you inquire after her foundation, it is a Rock that cannot be moved. If you ask after her walls, the Lord is a wall of fire round about her. If you ask for her bastions, fences and palisades, they are the perfections of our God that are around us; his wisdom to guide us; his omnipotence to protect us; his longanimity to bear us; and his grace to justify and save us. Only one gate has the city, and that is strait; only one way leads to it, and that is narrow. Whoever attempts to enter it by another way, by stealth, or by violence, over the walls, or through the roof, is a thief and a robber. When we look out of windows, our eyes fall on beloved mountains—on holy places. Here lies Golgotha, there the Mount of Olives, here Gethsemane, there Bethlehem, Eprata—all much-loved spots, that lie close about us; our city therefore, is Jerusalem.

The city has its festivals; for instance, when a poor sinner repents; its assemblies, when the brethren live together in unity and Jesus in the midst of them; its concerts, when they speak together in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and Jesus touches the springs of their hearts; and its spectacles, when they sit at the foot of the cross, beholding the Man with the crown of thorns, and his holy blood, as, making an atonement for sin, it flows from his wounds.

The city has likewise its marketplaces; there it is proclaimed: "Come ye that have no money; come, buy and eat; yea, come; buy wine and milk, without money and without price." It has also its council-

ber, where One presides who knows how to give you good counsel. Its police, too; there every citizen has in his heart the controlling power of the Spirit. Has it also its watchmen? Surely it has; they stand on the wall and blow the trumpet, and cry aloud when they see the Bridegroom cometh. And here and there stand guards upon the watch-towers, placed there by God, to see what hour the great clock of time has struck. And what do the guards announce in our days? "Past midnight," they proclaim from the house-tops, and the whole city is in anxious expectation of things that are to come.—Dr. F. W. Krummacher.

For the Prayer-Meeting.

Keeping the Heart.

Embosomed in a broad chasm, between two lofty summits of one of our eastern mountain-ranges, is a beautiful lake, the more beautiful, perhaps, from its setting like a jewel in the frame-work of craggy, precipitous, and frowning rocks, that watch grimly over its repose. In that sheltered nook, it may sometimes be seen —when the winds are hushed—like a molten mirror of silver giving back the image of the heavens, as they look calmly down upon it. What an emblem of the perfect peace of him whose mind is staid upon God! The everlasting mountains are his refuge, and under the shelter of a providence more faithful and enduring than the walls of rock, he takes upon his soul, as upon a mirror, the image of a heavenly loveliness.

But let one disturbing breath sweep over the surface of that lake, and though there are no stormy waves, no billowy wrestlings, the charm of its beauty has fled. The feeblest ripple shatters the glorious image that was reflected upon it. You see no more upon it the steady splendor of the sun, or the beautiful order of the firmament, where the moon and stars walk in their brightness. The image of the heavenly has disappeared

Is it not so with the believer, when the breath of worldliness, or the *light gust of* passion passes over his *spirit? It needs* not the force of the tempest, or the shock of the earthquake, to destroy his composure, or blot from the face of his soul the calm beauty of heaven reflected there. A single ripple will do it. An intruding breath of selfishness will sweep over his spirit, and in a moment change its aspect, covering it with the jarring and conflicting images of earth and sky, of stars and stones, of clouds and crags.

If we would grow in grace--if we would perfect the image of the heavenly begun within us—we must "keep our hearts with all diligence;" we must beware how we suffer the breath of worldliness to sweep over them; we must keep them safely guarded from the intrusion of those vain excitements which in a moment transform the face of the soul, and obliterate the lineaments of the divine likeness. It is only when, "with open face," we behold, "as in a glass the glory of the Lord," that "we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

For the Prayer-Meeting.

Power of Parental Influence.

That gifted but eccentric statesman, John Randolph, once remarked to a friend that he had been called a Frenchman, because he took the French side in politics, and though this was unjust, yet the truth was, that he should have been a French atheist, had it not been for one recollection, and that was the memory of the time when his mother used to take his little hands in hers, and teach him, on his knees, to say: "Our Father, which art in heaven"

What a strange power was there in that subtle influence which through a long course of years, held back that wayward mind from the black gulf of utter skepticism. It seems feeble at the first—no cord, no cable, but just the finest gossamer that floats unharmed on the quiet atmosphere of that sheltered nook, where a mother teaches her child to lisp its infant prayer. Time chafes it, years strain it almost to breaking, the fierce temptations of the world press against it, and yet it does not give way. That

silken thread, twined by a mother's fingers, becomes in fact the cable that holds fast to its anchor on life's stormy sea, a living vessel, freighted for immortality. One single memory —spanning the long interval of years, like an electric wire, connects age with childhood, carries the thought back to a mother's presence, bows manhood as of old at her knee, and teaches it still to lisp its infant prayer. It is too holy a thing for the rude assaults of temptation to sunder, too strong to be rent by the scoffer's breath.

What a lesson of encouragement to parental fidelity! You tremble for souls committed to your charge, as Eli of old trembled for the safety of the ark of God. He thought of the field of battle, and the uncertain issue of the conflict. You think of the stern struggle of probation, in which integrity, peace, and immortal hope are all at stake, of the bitter conflict in which the soul's eternal interests are imperiled. The hour will come when no father's care, and no mother's love will guide these erring feet or strengthen this fainting spirit, when the home of childhood will be among the things of the past, and the fireside benediction of hallowed influences will have no visible memorial. And yet you can send forth that child armed with a panoply that temptation shall assail, perhaps in vain. You can clothe it about with memories that seem airy and evanescent, indeed, but which may be more enduring than the iron mail. A simple, fervent, devoted piety, faithful to its solemn charge, has many a ground for hope. Its expectations may be long deferred. Its eagar anticipations may be doomed to defeat. The restraining influences of the past may seem strained even to breaking, but He who makes his strength perfect in our weakness, can and sometimes does make these the lines along which his own omnipotent grace will flash, to warn, admonish, and save.

The Actress.

An actress, in one of the English provincial or country theatres, was one day passing through the streets of the town in which she then resided, when her attention was attracted by the sound of voices, which she heard in a poor cottage before her. Curiosity prompted her to look in at the open door, when she saw a few poor people sitting together, one of whom, at the moment of her observation, was giving out the following hymn, which the others joined in singing:

"Depth of mercy! can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?" etc.

The tune was sweet and simple, but she heeded it not. The words had riveted her attention, and she stood motionless, until she was invited to enter by the woman of the house, who had observed her standing at the door. She complied, and remained during a prayer, which was offered by one of the little company; and uncouth as the expressions sounded, perhaps, to her ears, they carried with them a conviction of sincerity on the part of the person then employed. She quitted the cottage, but the words of the hymn followed her. She could not banish them from her mind, and at last she resolved to procure the book which contained it. She did so, and the more she read it the more decided her serious impressions became. She attended the ministry of the Gospel, read her hitherto neglected and despised Bible, and bowed herself in humility and contrition of heart before Him whose mercy she now felt she needed, whose sacrifices are those of a broken and a contrite spirit, and who has declared that with such sacrifice she is well pleased.

Her profession she determined at once and forever to renounce; and for some little time excused herself from appearing on the stage, without disclosing her change of sentiments, or making known her resolution finally to leave it.

The manager of the theater called upon her one morning, and requested her to sustain the principal character in a new play, which was to be performed the next week for his benefit. She had frequently performed this character to general admiration; but she now, however, told him her resolution never to appear as an actress

again, at the same time giving her reasons. At first he attempted to overcome her scruples by ridicule, but this was unavailing; he then represented the loss he should incur by her refusal, and concluded his arguments by promising that if to oblige him she would act on this occasion, it should be the last request of the kind he would ever make. Unable to resist his solicitations, she promised to appear, and on the appointed evening went to the theater. The character she assumed required her, on her first entrance, to sing a song; and when the curtain drew up the orchestra immediately began the accompaniment. But she stood as if lost in thought, and as one forgetting all around her and her situation. The music ceased, but she did not sing; and supposing her to be overcome by embarrassment, the band again commenced. A second time they paused for her to begin, and still she did not open her lips. A third time the air was played, and then, with clasped hands and eyes suffused with tears, she sung, not the song, but

> "Depth of mercy! can there be
> Mercy still reserved for me?"

It is almost useless to add that the performance was suddenly ended; many ridiculed, although some were led, from that memorable night, to "consider their ways," and to reflect on the wonderful power of that religion which could so influence the heart and change the life of one hitherto so vain, and so evidently pursuing the road which leadeth to destruction.

It will be satisfactory to the reader to know, that the change in Miss ——— was as permanent as it was singular; she walked consistently with her profession of religion for many years, and at length became the wife of a minister of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God Willing to Pardon.

It is wrong to think of God as implacable, and of Christ as interposing and prevailing upon him to let him take the sinner's place; nor are we to think of Christ as having taken us out of the hands of an angry Judge, and that to Christ alone we owe our pardon; that God was a stern creditor, who needed to be satisfied, and that Christ was our true friend, who kindly discharged the claim.

The death of Christ was not the procuring cause of willingness on the part of God to forgive sin; it was the means chosen and appointed by God himself, by which it would be consistent for him to forgive sin.

Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."
—Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."
—Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON III.

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DUTY, INDIVIDUAL AND IMPERATIVE.

"WHAT is that to thee? Follow thou me."—JOHN 21: 22.

SUCH was the rebuke which our Lord addressed to Peter for neglecting his own duty, while inopportunely concerning himself about the duty of another. The Saviour had commanded the Apostle to follow him. The Apostle having risen up to obey, turned around and saw John also following; and being the same impulsive and variable creature that he had ever been, his curiosity was at once excited, and his thoughts diverted from the service required of himself to the question of what should be the course of John, and what particular part Christ had assigned him to perform. Hence, instead of going forward directly in his own work, he stood still and asked: "Lord, what shall this man do?"

To this unseasonable inquiry our text is the answer. It is as if Christ had said: "Your question is entirely irrelevant. What John shall do has no connection with your responsibility. Your

duty is personal, present, imperative, and independent of the state and conduct of all others. I have commanded you to follow me. It is yours to obey, directly, unhesitatingly, and for yourself, without being influenced by what those around you may do or not do."

Such was the scope of the text as it was originally spoken. But apart from this special application, it contains a general truth of great and vital importance. It teaches us that our obligation to obey and serve Christ is individual, immediate, and unchanged by any obstacles that may arise from the deportment of others, or from the delusion of our own minds.

Many there are who, when urged to follow Christ by embracing his salvation, and devoting their hearts and lives to his cause, allow themselves to be deterred by some inquiry foreign to their duty, or by some real or imagined difficulty with which they have no practical concern. Such may be found, in great numbers, both among those who profess to be religious, and those who have never submitted to the claims of the Redeemer. To each of these classes the text conveys a most appropriate admonition. For the sake of brevity, however, I shall leave the former wholly out of view, and confine myself exclusively to the latter. It is my wish to address those unconverted persons who refuse to comply with the overtures of the Gospel, until every extraneous question which they can ask is settled, and every fancied impediment which they can conjecture removed out of their way.

I. The first class which I shall mention, as coming under this description consists of those who hesitate to yield themselves to Christ, because they cannot understand all that the Bible contains.

It admits not of question that there are in the Scriptures some "things hard to be understood"—deep and inscrutable problems which no human intellect can solve. This results necessarily from the weakness of our faculties, and the infinite nature of the subjects of which Revelation treats. It is to be expected that our feeble reason, which meets a thousand enigmas even in the affairs of this life, should find itself baffled and confounded whenever it attempts to grasp the mighty secrets of eternity. But "what is that to to thee?" These mysteries belong only to the field of speculative truth—to those recondite matters of the celestial world which are wholly dissevered from thy present wants and duties. All that is practical, all that relates to the condition of man as a sinner, to the method of his recovery by the atoning death and justifying righteousness of Christ, and to the obligations which press upon him in these circumstances, is entirely plain and simple. How irrational is it for men to reject blessings of which they have a conscious need, and to disregard commads which they know and can comprehend, because there may be other points connected

with them which their limited powers can not fully explore! You would ridicule the folly of him who should refuse necessary food until he could trace out all the hidden processes of digestion and nutrition. Not less absurd are you in refusing to become religious because you can not unravel all the mysteries of religion. There is no difficulty in any thing that is essential to your salvation. You know both from the Bible and from your own consciousness, that you are guilty and condemned; that you have broken the divine law, and are liable to eternal death. This you can understand. You know that God, though just and holy, is full of mercy to the children of men, and that he has given his Only-Begotten Son to be their Redeemer, and to open by his obedience and sufferings a way for their deliverance. This you can understand. You know, too—for the Gospel emphatically proclaims it—that if you repent and believe in Christ, you shall be pardoned and saved. This you can understand. Then do it. Go at once to the Saviour and commit your everlasting interests to his hands. This you can do, and this is all you need do. Whatever obscurity may appear to your dim vision to hang over the higher realms of truth, the fact of salvation by faith in Christ is clear and intelligible to the weakest capacity. There is here no darkness, no mystery. All is distinct and palpable as the day. What madness, then, is it to turn away from the gracious offers of the Gospel, from the plain duties that are vital to your happiness, because the scheme of redemption, which propounds those offers and prescribes those duties, may involve other topics too vast for your comprehension!

An emigrant is journeying across the great American Desert to the Land of Gold and the Clime of the Sun. He is perishing with thirst. The scanty supply of water which he took with him has long been exhausted, and for many weary miles no spring or brook, and not even a stagnant pool left from the winter snows, has met his eye. Nothing is visible wherever he looks but the blazing sky above, and the hot, arid waste around, brown with drought, or white with drifting salt. With staggering limbs, and parched lips, and swollen tongue, and brain on fire, he drags himself forward, battling with death, yet feeling that he must soon give over the struggle. At length, just as he is about to abandon all further effort, and lie down in despair to die, his ear, rendered acute by suffering, catches the low, faint murmur of a distant stream. Hope and the love of life revive at the sound, and with all his remaining strength he hurries towards it. As he comes near he sees a spring of water gushing out, cool and clear, from the side of a rocky bluff, splashing and sparkling in its little basin, and gliding away in a gurgling rill. But just as he is on the point of putting his lips to it, and quenching his thirst with full draughts, he stops and says to himself: "Whence does this water come? Is it from rain falling on the mountain-top, percolating

down through the fissures in the rocks, and bubbling out in the stream which I see? Or does its birthplace lie in some secret fountain deep in the heart of the earth? I do not know, and I will not drink of it till I do know." And so he turns away to encounter again the horrors of the dry and burning desert.

Do you tell me that fatuity so monstrous is impossible? In relation to the supply of bodily wants it may be, but not in relation to the needs of the soul. Your own conduct is the strict moral parallel of the case I have supposed. You are in peril of dying from spiritual thirst, the necessities of your immortal nature can not be met by any thing within yourself, or in the world around you. But God has opened a Fountain. Christ has said: "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." The waters of Salvation, welling forth from the Mercy-seat above, have descended in copious floods to refresh and bless the earth. And will you refuse to drink of the River of Life which flows full and free before you, proffering health and gladness to your famished soul, because you can not discover every thing pertaining to its source far, far away in the recesses of the Eternal mind?

In one of those financial convulsions which so often sweep over the land, you have lost your all. Property and occupation are alike gone. The hoardings of former years are spent, and you have borrowed and borrowed till you have not a neighbor or acquaintance who would not go a mile out of his way to avoid you. Dig you can not, for there are none to hire you. To beg is useless, for there are none to give you. For days, weeks, you have scarcely tasted wholesome food, and famine, gaunt and inexorable, stares you in the face. In this hour of your utmost need, an old friend, your father's friend, and your own friend in better times, meets you, and looking pitifully into your dim eye, and at your haggard cheek, lays his hand on your shoulder, and says: "Come home with me to dinner." You go with him to a splendid mansion. You enter a large and richly furnished dining-hall. You see before you a long table loaded with food in every variety, from the plainest to the most luxurious. At the lower end, where you stand, the dishes are all simple, nutritious, solid, precisely such as your famishing state demands. And every dish is open, showing its contents at a glance. But farther on, towards the head of the board, there are dishes of a more complicated character, reserved for a latter stage of the feast; and these are covered, some with covers of tin, some with covers of silver, and some with covers of gold. Your host bids you welcome, and presses you most affectionately to sit down at once and satisfy your hunger. But instead of thankfully accepting his offer, you look along the table, and ask: "What is under those covers yonder?" Your friend replies that those dishes are not suited to your present necessities, that they belong to the dessert; and that when you get

to them, he will take the covers off. And again he urges you to partake of his bounty. But you draw yourself up haughtily, wrap your ragged garments about you, and exclaiming, "I'll not sit down to a table of mysteries," walk out into the cold, dark street, amid the howling storm, alone with your pride and your starvation.

Let me impress this point by yet another illustration. A man falls into a deep well in the cellar of a lofty building, and, without help, must inevitably be drowned. From the ceiling above a rope is let down to him through the hatchway, and friendly voices call to him to seize hold of it, while strong arms are ready to draw him out. But instead of doing this, he complains that he can not see the upper end of the rope, and does not know how it is secured. Those who are trying to rescue him tell him not to trouble himself about the upper end; they will take care of that; they have it fast to a beam in the roof; his business is to make sure of the lower end. Then he stops to ask, with what kind of a knot the rope is fastened, and what sort of timber the beam is made of to which it is attached. Thus, while neglecting the rope, he continues to cry, "How is it tied? How is it tied?" till the waters close over him, and his vain questions are smothered in death!

Do you say that such a man would be a fool? Take heed, dear hearer, that thou be not a greater fool. Thou hast fallen into a well, a deep and loathsome well—"the horrible pit and miry clay" of impenitence and sin; and thou art in danger every moment of sinking down, down forever into "the bottomless pit" of hell beneath. God has flung out from heaven the golden cord, the threefold cord, of the Covenant of Mercy. He has made one end of it fast to the pillars of his throne, while the other reaches to thee; and he bids thee lay hold of it, and he will draw thee up out of the slough of thy pollutions to the purity and bliss of his own presence. Dost thou answer, that the upper part of the cord is above thy sight, and that thou canst not perceive all the processes by which it has been secured? "What is that to thee?" Enough for thee to know that the rope is fast, that the rope is strong, able to bear thy weight, and that of millions like thee. O sinner! grasp the rope—lay hold of it by faith—cling to it by prayer—and thou shalt mount up, as on angel's wings, to the Paradise of God; and there, safe from the yawning abyss, thou mayest ponder through eternity the strength of the rope, and the infinite wisdom displayed in the mysteries of its adjustment.

II. A second class refuse to repent and believe in Christ, because they do not know how they became sinners; or, in other words, can not comprehend the origin of moral evil.

The entrance of sin into the world is, indeed, a question that has

baffled the profoundest minds. God has not seen fit to answer it; and therefore, it must remain, in the present state of our faculties, unexplained and inexplicable. That the Almighty could have prevented the fall of our first parents, and the consequent corruption and ruin entailed upon their posterity, we can not doubt; and the only reason we dare assign why he did not do it, is, that having resolved to govern the world by moral, not physical force, in restraining men from sin by an act of absolute power, he would have destroyed their free agency, and thus have subverted the whole system of administration which he had established. He therefore deemed it best, on the whole, to suffer evil to exist, determined ultimately to overrule it for his own glory and the highest good of the universe. This conjecture, though probable, can not claim to be an adequate solution, and human sagacity after all its efforts, must leave the subject where it found it—among the incomprehensible things of Divine Sovereignty.

But "what is that to thee?" You are a sinner, however you became so. This is the naked, actual fact with which you have to do. By nature and by practice you are the enemy of God, estranged from him in heart and in life, and exposed to the penalty of that holy law which proclaims: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." The disease is within you, preying upon your very vitals; and infinitely more important is it for you to know how it may be cured, than how it arose. And, blessed be God, there is no obscurity here. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin." In the atoning sacrifice offered on Calvary, a remedy has been provided for transgression; and whoever accepts that sacrifice in contrition and faith, shall be purified from guilt and absolved from punishment. This remedy is proffered, without money and without price, to all who are willing to receive it. No philosophy is needed to understand it, no science to apply it. Its only mystery is this—look and live, believe and be saved. And will you neglect a provision so simple, so easy, so efficacious, because you can not ascertain exactly in what manner you came to need it? That you do need it, is a great and fearful reality. Without it you are lost forever. Oh! what infatuation, to stand still and dispute about the parentage of sin, while sin itself, actual sin, personal sin, willful sin, sin multiplied into a thousand forms and shapes of aggravation, is hurrying you down to the second death!

A city at midnight is roused by an alarm of fire. The bells ring out their startling summons. The engines thunder along the streets. A stately mansion is burning. From roof, and gable, and casement, and balcony, the maddening flames leap forth, dyeing the heavens with blood, and shedding a lurid glare on the upturned faces [redacted]. Soon it is whispered that in one of the [redacted] there is a man asleep,

and at the mercy of the conflagration. A thrill of horror goes through the multitude. What shall be done? The stairways and passages are all in a blaze. Every avenue of escape seems cut off. A bold fireman seizes a ladder and places it against the window of the room occupied by the unconscious victim. Up, up he mounts through blinding smoke and rushing flame, for it is life that he goes to save. He reaches the window—he dashes it in, and calls upon the sleeper to come forth and descend. But the heedless inmate, instead of complying, raises himself on his elbow, rubs his eyes, and asks: "How on earth the house came on fire!" Fool! idiot! is the answer—no matter now how the house came on fire; it is on fire; and you will be burned up if you wait to find out in what way the fire caught. Still he insists that he can not go till he has satisfied himself whether the fire was communicated by accident or by design; from a candle borne by some careless hand, or from the torch of the incendiary. And while he lingers in this bootless quest, roaming from room to room, over shaking floors and beneath tottering rafters, the roof falls in, the walls collapse, and he is buried under the blazing ruins.

O sinner! such is thy conduct, and such will be thy fate, unless thou art wise in time. Thy house, the house of thy soul, is on fire. No matter whether man or devil kindled the flame—kindled it is, and is wrapping thy whole nature in its destroying embrace. It has spread to every faculty and to every affection. Body, mind, and heart are alike pervaded by it. It smoulders in the workings of inward depravity. It blazes out in the lawlessness of open transgression. And this fire of sin, unless quenched by the blood of Christ, will soon become the fire of judgment, the fire of God's wrath, the fire of hell, that shall burn forever. As yet there is hope for thee. The waters of mercy are flowing by. The Refuge of the Gospel stands open. Oh! flee before it be too late. Escape for thy life—look not behind thee lest thou be consumed. Stop not to ask how the fire originated. It will be time enough for such inquiries when the fire is put out, and thou hast reached the Sanctuary above, whither it can never come.

III. Another class hold back from coming to any decision on the great matter of their salvation, because there is such a diversity of religious opinions in the world.

This is an excuse often urged. It is a very common thing for unconverted persons, when exhorted to give heed to their spiritual welfare, to reply that they know not what to believe; that amid the conflict of sects and creeds, each asserting its own infallibility, and denouncing all others, it is impossible to tell which is right and which wrong; and that, therefore, they deem it their wisest course to attend to their temporal interests, and let religion alone altogether.

But you seem to overlook the fact that the adoption of such a rule would cut you off from having anything to do with the affairs of this world, no less than with those of the next. Men differ as frequently and as widely about secular matters as they do about religion. In politics, in law, in medicine, in trade, in agriculture, in science, in all departments of thought and occupation, they hold the most dissimilar opinions, and carry them out into lines of practice equally dissimilar. You can scarcely find two individuals who will take precisely the same view of the simplest proposition, or be fully agreed as to the best mode of doing even the most common thing. The minds of men are so differently constituted; their intellectual endowments are so unequal, their powers of perception so unlike; each is so enveloped in a haze of prepossessions and prejudices, and so inclined to look at all subjects from his own personal standpoint—that the marvel is, not that men should differ, but that they should ever agree. So that, if you are determined to have nothing to do with religion because contradictory theories are advanced respecting it, you must, to be consistent, keep yourself aloof from every pursuit and business in life.

As a matter of fact, however, you greatly overrate the real diversity of religious sentiment which exists among those whose opinions are entitled to any regard. It is a thing naturally to be looked for that unregenerate men, following blindly the impulses of their depravity, hating God and God's revealed word, should either wholly reject the great doctrines of the Gospel, or pervert them to suit their own sinful desires and passions. Their love alike of present indulgence and of future safety leads them instinctively to dissent from whatever might seem to interrupt the one, or to endanger the other. And the forms of unbelief or of wrong belief which they embrace, will be as changeful and belligerent as the corrupt propensities from which they spring. The ungodly world is thus a vast caldron where all the ingredients of wickedness are seething together, and ever and anon sending up to the surface bubbles of falsehood of every shape and color. But among those who have been enlightened and sanctified by the Spirit of Grace, there is a substantial agreement on all the fundamental truths of Christianity. They may separate in outward things, in modes of organization, and forms of worship; but in all that is intrinsically important, they are undivided. The vital teachings of the Bible with respect to the depravity of man, the atonement of Christ, the necessity of repentance and faith, the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit, the eternal happiness of the righteous, the eternal misery of the wicked, are universally held by all real Christians throughout the world. And it has ever been so. The people of God, of all names, of all countries, of all ages, bear here one harmonious testimony. I listen to the voices of patriarchs

and prophets coming down to me from the far-off centuries; and what do I hear? "Salvation by the blood of a crucified Jesus." I listen to the voices of apostles and evangelists, speaking to me from the pages of the New Testament; and what do I hear? "Salvation by the blood of a crucified Jesus." I listen to the voices of the confessors and martyrs of the Reformation; and what do I hear? "Salvation by the blood of a crucified Jesus." I listen to the voices of all the pious in our own day, of every denomination, and in every land; and I find them to be in perfect unison, proclaiming, without one discordant note: "Salvation by the blood of a crucified Jesus."

But supposing this were not the case; supposing the differences of doctrinal belief among Christians were as numerous and as broad as you imagine them to be—"what is that to thee?" To your own Master you must stand or fall. The Saviour requires you to follow him, to embrace his Gospel, and fulfill its laws, regardless of what the whole world beside may believe or do. His Word is your only guide. It marks out the path you are to take with such clearness and precision, that only they who willfully shut their eyes can fail to see it. With such light to direct your steps, the uncertainty and confusion of human opinions can furnish you no excuse for indecision and delay. No—amid all the windings of error, the finger of Eternal Truth points ever straight onward to the Cross of Christ; and high above all the Babel-tongues of delusion, crying, "Lo! here, and lo! there"—its voice is heard, saying: "This is the way, walk ye in it." Oh! when you stand at the judgment-seat, and the Bible, which you now neglect, shall follow you there as an accusing witness, think you the plea that you knew not what to believe will avail you? Make not now a defense which you will not dare to make then; but, taking the Book of God into thy hands, with lowly prayer for the Spirit's teaching, examine for thyself, decide for thyself, and thou shalt find rest to thy soul.

IV. The last class which I shall notice justify their indifference to religion, by the alleged inconsistency and unfaithfulness of its professors.

Not seldom is the assumption put forth, that the avowed disciples of Christ differ in nothing from the mass of the ungodly around them; and hence that religion is but a sham, and its votaries, fanatics or hypocrites. To this we reply, that the charge, in the extent in which it is made, is utterly untrue. Doubtless, corrupt members may be found in the Church of God—men whose hearts have never been renewed, and who wear the mask of piety as a screen to the wickedness of their lives. This is to be expected; for in this fallen world no vigilance can guard even the most sacred retreats from the intrusion of the unworthy. We

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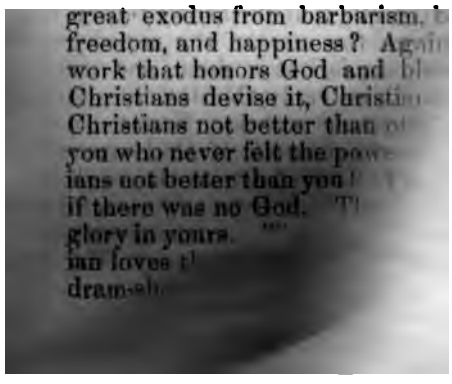

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their authors, whether it is any more reasonable for us to expect that, on condition of our digging and mellowing the ground and putting seeds into it, the Creator will open those little seeds, and fetch an abundant harvest out of them; or that, on condition of our putting certain kinds of food into our mouths, he will put forth his energy to change it into blood, and muscle, and bones, for the upbuilding of these bodies; or that, on condition of our stretching a wire across the continent, and adjusting certain metals and fluids, according to an arrangement which he has appointed, we may write our message, and he will, in the twinkling of an eye, by an instantaneous, imperceptible thrill along that wire, cause the message to be faithfully written at the other end of it, on the other side of the continent—whether it is any more reasonable to believe that God will put forth his almighty power for us, to do such things, on such conditions, than that he will put forth the same power to help us and to bless us, on condition of our asking him to do so.

I say, this might be a sufficient answer to such speculations. Certainly it would show that there really is no less difficulty in harmonizing the unchangeableness of God's purposes, with the utility of man's labor, than with the efficacy of man's prayers.

Likely it will quite generally be found, that there is in the same minds really as much skepticism in the one respect as in the other. Those who think it absurd to pray to God do not really see his hand and his working in those wonders by which he seeks to make himself known. They do not recognize the living God—but only a blind mechanical thing which they call nature—in those wonderful and mysterious processes to which I have alluded. It is not far from Deism to Atheism. It is not much better to believe in a God who will not hear our prayers, than not to believe in any God at all. Not much better in its effect upon us, and not much more philosophical.

It is, however, a better answer to that kind of speculation, to say that God, in his word, assures us that prayer to him is not useless—is efficacious. One of the many plain declarations to this effect, is the text, upon which I now ask you to meditate. Some of the most important points in the Bible theory of prayer are here exhibited. We will consider

I. The character of the person supposed to offer the prayer.
II. The specific character of the prayer supposed to be offered.
III. The efficacy of such prayer.

I. The character of the person is comprehensively exhibited by that significant word "righteous"—"a righteous man." We are accustomed to insist so much upon the necessity of offering our prayers in the name of Christ, and of feeling and confessing our utter unworthiness to be heard in our own name, that there

may be danger of our getting the impression that our own character has nothing to do with the efficacy of our prayers. The Scriptures teach us very differently from that. We are indeed to offer all our petitions through the Mediator, and to know that, being sinners, we can have access to God in no other name. Yet are we also to remember that Christ brings us to God no farther and no faster than he brings us away from our sins—that we have real access to God no farther than we are made to resemble him. Prayer, to have any influence or efficacy with God, must be the offering of a righteous person—a person who has the character which is described by that term, in the Bible. That it does not denote entire sinlessness, is evident from the fact that the Bible teaches us that there are no such persons on earth, while it does call some persons righteous. It is properly applicable only to those who have received God's gracious justification, and are faithfully and by his grace successfully striving to become holy. It does not mean those who think they have been converted, but are in no way better than before, any more than it means those who are satisfying themselves with their own goodness and disowning their need of Christ's atonement.

Those who have truly submitted themselves to the righteousness of God, who, by faith and repentence, have secured his gracious justification, are new creatures in Christ Jesus, are leading the new life of holiness,

That method of grace by which sinners are reconciled to God, takes effect on their character. He does not give men access to him, and influence with him, in their sins.

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me," said the Psalmist—and what could more impressively exhibit God's abhorrence of the prayers of those who indulge in wicked practices—or what could be a more emphatic rejection of them, than that which is found in the first chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah? "When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood."

"Wash ye, make you clean: put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Ah! my hearers, that is plain language. We can not well mistake its meaning. God will not regard the prayers of those who live in sin, who indulge in wickedness.

If there are any of you, who have been in the habit of thinking yourselves very orthodox, and very humble Christians, because in your daily prayers you disown all idea of claiming God's favor, on the ground of your merit, and are feeling quite easy in view of your habitual sins, because it is not on the ground of your own deservings that you hope for God's favor, I would

only say to you, read the first chapter of Isaiah, to find out how God regards you, and how utterly worthless are your prayers.

If you are putting into your purse the gains of extortion, or of deceit, or keeping there the wages of unrequited labor; if you have the guilt of unredressed wrong, or of unrepented sin, on your soul, you are in no condition to offer effectual prayer to Him who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil." It is the prayer of a righteous man that avails with him. Understand then, my hearers, that if you wish to offer prevailing prayer, you must look to it that you be such persons whom God will hear. It is not enough to be careful what sort of prayers you offer—you must be careful what sort of persons you are, that offer them. Not enough that all be correct and orthodox in the prayer, nor even that you be very fervent and importunate in offering it. It behooves you to have regard to your habitual state—to your settled and permanent character. And let it be for the encouragement of all them who are humbly endeavoring to lead lives of obedience to God—trying to shape and direct all their conduct by the Bible, "seeking by patient continuance in well-doing, for glory, honor, and immortality"—let it be for the encouragement of all such, that their influence with God, in prayer, shall be in proportion to their success in these efforts to improve their character. God will hear you the more kindly, and answer you the more graciously, the more faithfully you obey him.

II. The character of the prayer itself next claims our consideration. It is "effectual fervent prayer." The Bible tells us that: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." That which is outward and visible is apt to fix our attention, and indeed our knowledge of that which is internal and unseen is commonly derived only from that which is outward and visible. Hence we "know in part" only. Our knowledge is fragmentary and imperfect. We have a scriptural intimation that in the future world we shall know in a different way, and more perfectly, "even as also we are known." Such direct, absolute, and perfect knowledge has God always, of all subjects. He does not have to infer any thing, nor to conclude any thing by a process of argument. All his knowledge is direct, intuitive, absolute.

In this matter of prayer, we hear a man pray, and if his words are fit, and his manner solemn and earnest, we presume that his affections are warm, that his heart is engaged. But we can know the latter only as an inference from the former. Not so with God. The words, the manner, the look and tones are nothing to him. He sees the heart—directly knows the mind—has immediate observation of the spirit. What kind of prayer then ought we to expect to have influence with him—to be regarded by him as to

constitute the condition on which he will bestow specific favors? Of course this will not be determined by the outward form, or any of the sensible phenomena of prayer. The accuracy or the eloquence of its words and phrases—the decorum or the vehemence of its utterance—these can have no influence. Unless the prayer is what it seems to be, it is worse than if it did not seem to be what it does. For God will not be mocked, and any attempt to mock him must receive his frown. Prayer, then, in order to avail, must not merely seem, it must be earnest. There is, perhaps, no other word that better conveys the idea which our translators have expressed by the two words, "effectual," and "fervent." A man can have no influence with God, in prayer, unless he is in earnest. This implies (1) that he be sincere. The desire which he expresses to God must be his real desire. It must be no pretension, no hypocrisy. It is to be feared that much prayer is offered, in public and in private, that has not this character of entire sincerity. Oh! it is a high attainment to be wholly free from guile—to have the lips, and the looks, and the tones, and the whole manner always express fairly, honestly, courageously, just what the heart means. Although we know that the eye of God searches our inmost souls, and that his ear hears our most silent thoughts, we do not, it is to be feared, always so remember this, and are not always so affected by it as to save us from hypocrisy before him. The thought ought to humble us. How wretchedly perverse must the souls indeed be, that can be guilty of insincerity before such a Being, under an omniscient eye—knowing, all the while, that that eye searches them through and through. Certainly, prayer must be sincere, to have influence with him.

True earnestness in prayer also implies (2) a high appreciation of the object sought, and a strong desire for its attainment. In fact, the most prominent objects of prayer are of such a nature that we can not be perfectly sincere in our desires for them, without giving great strength to our desires. If we sincerely wish for a thing, we are likely to wish for it with a strength of desire proportioned to its perceived importance. We are then to understand that prayer has influence with God, avails to procure blessings from him, in proportion to the strength of desire with which it is offered—in proportion to its energy—not the vehemence of its audible expression, but the real intensity of the desires which prompt it. This accords with the various representations of the Bible upon this subject. God is represented as a Father, pitying his children, and disposed to do them favors: will not that disposition be in proportion to the strength of their right desires. The Saviour, by two remarkable parables, teaches us to persevere in prayer, with importunity, intimating that thus we may at length obtain that which at first seems to be refused. What but strong desire will ever lead to importunate entreaty?

The examples of successful prayer which the Bible gives us, are characterized by evident intensity of desire for the blessings sought and obtained. Jacob, wrestling with the angel, Moses interceding for the offending people, Abraham interceding for Sodom, Elijah bowing himself upon the mountain in prayer for rain, when the land had been parched with a three years' drought in answer to his previous prayer—these are instances that will readily occur to you. The New Testament writers cite some of these examples, and the whole of their representations are calculated to give us the same impression, namely, that God regards the depth and strength of desire, in those who offer prayer to him, and answers accordingly.

I might also appeal to the experience of Christians in more modern times. Those who have had the most decisive evidence that God has heard them, who have received the most evident answers to their prayers, have been those who have offered their prayers with the most fervent desires, and urged them with the greatest importunity.

It is not enough, then, that we look to our general conduct and character, and see that we be righteous persons; not enough that we be upright, and honest, and even pious, in order that our prayers may prevail. There is a specific character belonging to the prayer itself, and that character is this sacred earnestness, this holy fervor of desire, lifting the soul to God in urgent, importunate entreaty—laying hold upon him humbly yet eagerly, and with a holy boldness which he permits, like that of Jacob, of Abraham, and of Moses.

Such prayer is efficacious.

This was to be our third topic.

III. Its efficacy.—The plain and pointed declaration of the text is, that it "availeth much." It has great influence, great power, great efficacy, in obtaining blessings from God. What a decisive answer to all the cavils of skeptics, and to all the questionings of philosophy, and to all the doubts of our own feeble faith? We have it written here in this book authenticated to us as God's word, that prayer, such prayer of such persons, does avail much. And has not the voice of the great God power to silence our questionings and to banish our doubts? Will we be tossed and shaken by speculations about that upon which he has given so clear and decisive utterance? Thus invited and thus assured, can we not carry our petitions to him, expecting to prevail?

Here the question can hardly fail to arise in our minds whether we are such persons, and whether our prayers are of such a character as would entitle us to this confidence, according to the instruction of the text and of the Bible at large. Yet it would not be as wise to occupy ourselves with this inquiry, looking back-

ward on the past, as with that dealing with ourselves before God, by which we may make good our title to the assurance of this text for the future.

How strong is the motive here presented to upright, holy, godly living—to the putting away from us of all sin—to the steadfast continuance in efforts to obey God—to that following after God which consists in faithful, constant, affectionate obedience—to that patient and careful self-discipline, and that humble subjection of ourselves to God's appointed means of grace whereby the soul is sanctified! In proportion to our success in these efforts will be our influence with the Most High in prayer. The more holy we become, the more near access shall we gain to him, and the more prevalent will be our intercessions with him.

How also shall we secure in ourselves that earnestness in prayer which is essential to its efficacy? Doubtless all our successful efforts for the general improvement of our Christian character will help us in this respect. The more thorough and decided and deep-toned is our piety, the greater will be our susceptibility of such earnestness in prayer, the greater our readiness to be affected by those considerations that are fitted to awaken such fervent desires within us. But besides this general and permanent preparation of our hearts, there are practical measures by which we can awaken our interest in those objects for which we ought especially to pray.

Take, for example, the object which was presented by Paul, in an affecting request for the prayers of his Christian brethren, "that the word of God may have free course and be glorified." That certainly is an appropriate and scriptural subject of prayer; it is one for which we have every reason to believe that the earnest prayer of the righteous would "avail much." It is a practical question of the very highest importance how can we secure in ourselves appropriately earnest desires for that so great blessing?

We can at least direct our contemplations towards it. We can seriously consider it. We can look at it in its several important and affecting aspects; we can regard the condition of the community in which we live; we can think of the sad state and prospects of the impenitent; we can consider the lamentable prevalence of error and of sin; we can see the adaptation of God's word, when made efficacious, to remedy the evils existing among us, and to transform and save the souls of these impenitent people. And when these things are brought before our minds, when our steady contemplation is directed upon them, will they not affect us with fervent desire for the putting forth of God's own power to give effect to his word? Can we, hoping in Christ for ourselves, see our friends without hope, and not feel interested for them? Can we, loving Christ, see his cause languishing without earnest desire for the revival of his work? Can we look over the community and take a fair view of its religious condition, and not

feel ourselves prompted to cry with strongest importunity to God to open the windows of heaven, and to rain righteousness upon us?

Surely it becomes us to give our minds to such contemplations and to try if our hearts will not be thus affected. Let us remember too, that appropriate efforts in this cause will strongly tend to increase our interest in it. God has not designed that we should pray for the putting forth of his energy for the promotion of his work without putting forth our own in appropriate labors for the same end. Nor does it seem to be according to his arrangement that we should be able to pray with fervor and with faith for that for which we are not willing, in every appropriate way, to exert ourselves. Humble prayer and obedient effort are wont to go together. They promote each other. If then, you are conscious that your prayers are wanting in appropriate fervor, address yourselves to faithful and patient labors, and if you find yourselves feeble and inefficient in labors, let that send you back to prayers, and let your prayers and labors thus be united that labor may excite you to more fervent prayers, and prayer may strengthen you for more vigorous labor, and that God may, consistently with his revealed plan, pour out his Spirit upon you, and abundantly bless and prosper your efforts to advance his cause.

Remember also that there is nothing in which you may more certainly have his help than in this very matter of prayer. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered." If we will submit ourselves to the Spirit's guidance; if we will be obedient to his promptings; if we will, in humility, seek his help, he will help our infirmities, and will teach us to pray in such a manner that our prayers will be heard and graciously answered.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

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Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting.

THIS sacred and consecrated spot continues from day to day, from week to week, from month to month, to be a scene of unutterable interest for the answers to prayer, and for the fervent supplications which go up for spiritual blessings on immortal souls.

A PRISONER'S TESTIMONY.—The speaker said he had been seven months a close prisoner of war in the Parish prison of New-Orleans —a vile hole, full of all sorts of abominations—a place of filth and disease, in which he was deprived of all the comforts and many of the necessaries of life. The men there confined, like himself, knew not what was before them. They knew, however, that if they remained there through the hot season, they would most likely be all carried out corpses. There was profanity, and blasphemy, and obscenity all around them. There was a despotism in their treatment received at the hands of their keepers, which was hard to bear.

But in the midst of all these things, he must say that he had enjoyed more in a single day in that Parish prison in New-Orleans than in any other single day in his whole life.

"You will ask," said the speaker, "how this can be? Let me tell you. It was in answer to prayer. We had a prayer-meeting among the prisoners. We had the approaches to the throne of grace in our possession, and we occupied them. We had such prayer-meetings as you would scarcely expect to find elsewhere. Men here have spoken of the blessedness of faith, as well as of its importance. We had that faith of which mention is made in this meeting in lively exercise. We had blessed times, I can assure you. We committed our all to God, and we felt that we could trust him. We did trust him. You never saw such trust anywhere, and know nothing about it, unless you have been in like trials. A man can never know what his faith is until it appears under trial. Here at your homes, with your families around you, and all your wants supplied, and abundance of the choicest comforts of life poured into your bosoms, what can you know of the trial of your faith?

"But be shut up in a loathsome prison, with enemies for keepers, who were blood-thirsty and cruel, surrounded by vices more abhorrent than the abounding diseases and death, and you may begin to apprehend something of the trial of your faith. Then let you be found rejoicing in God by reason of your faith, and trust in him, so that you are made to feel that your happiest days before are nothing to be compared with your happiness in that prison—then you can talk of faith in God.

"We had our daily prayer-meetings. Many were awakened, and a large number were converted. Oh! those were sweet, blessed days. Sinners were found coming to Jesus day by day, and we rejoiced with exceeding joy over their conversion. The joy of this faith is more than I can describe. It must be felt in order to be

known. It is triumphant joy. It is joy in full assurance of hope, when there is not a single outward sign to justify it. It is believing in God, and taking him at his word. I am glad to know that this blessed place of prayer bears witness to this faith. It is that which lends an indescribable charm to this place."

For the Prayer Meeting.

Feeding the Lambs.

A PREACHER and pastor, on coming out of church one Sabbath, after preaching a learned and elaborate discourse, was accosted by a pious elder, who said to the minister, in a kindly tone: "Dear sir, be careful not to put the hay so high in the rack that the lambs can't reach it." Many sermons shoot over the heads of many common people, much more over the heads of children. The parables, the plain and beautiful illustrations which the Saviour employed in speaking to the crowds who attended on his ministry, are models to be followed by modern ministers. Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost is a striking instance of the simple power of truth, plain, direct, pungent, with no efforts at oratory.

I know one minister (but would like to know hundreds of the same pattern) with whom it is quite a common thing to say, "Now, I have a word here for my young friends," or something similar. Then comes a simplification of what has been addressed to the older hearers, or a new point suited to the little folks, or a practical appeal to them, graced and pointed with figures and narratives which commend them to the juvenile part of the congregation. Why should a habit of this kind be found in only one here and another there, with miles of manuscript and whole Sabbaths of speaking between, in which the world is falsely assumed to be peopled with adults, and adults alone?

This forgetfulness or neglect of the young must come to a conclusive end. They are there in the pews, with their lively intellects and warm hearts. Let them be spoken to. Let every minister, as he prays, as he studies the Bible, as he consults books, as he bends over his manuscript-page, bethink himself of what he has for the little ones, and so get some food ready for them. Nay, more—as he skims the newspaper, walks the streets, visits among his people, goes among the rich, the poor, the strong, the sick, the rejoicing, the sorrowing, let him cull materials for the bairns. So will his pulpit-work be not less acceptable or profitable to the grown people, and he will reach a wider circle than he reached before. I know a little boy, six years old, who is frequently asked, when he returns from church: "Well, what did the minister say?" His answer on one occasion was: "He said, 'let us pray.'" This was uttered after a pause full of careful reflection.

Ministerial Counsels.

1. THE ministerial office is the continuation of the prophetic office of Christ, or the organ through which Christ himself perpetuates his ministerial power. Hence ministers of the Gospel are called, after their official character, ambassadors in Christ's stead, (2 Cor. 5 : 20 ;) ministers (servants) of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, (1 Cor. 4 : 1 :) coworkers with God, (1 Cor. 2 : 9 ;)

the salt of the earth and the light of the world, (Matt. 5: 13–16.)

2. The office of the ministry is the most exalted and honorable vocation; for it was the work of the Son of God and of his Apostles, the greatest teachers and benefactors of mankind on earth. It is also the most responsible and weighty office, because it treats of the weal or woe of immortal souls. It is further the most culpable and abhorrent profession, if it be followed under the promptings of worldly gain and ambition, without faith and love to Christ.

3. A preacher must have a double call—an inner one from the Holy Spirit, and an outer one from the authorities of the Church. Without such a call, he has no ministerial authority, and becomes as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

4. The controlling motive of the true minister is love to Christ and undying souls. "The love of God constraineth us," saith Paul.

5. The highest example of the ministry, both in doctrine and walk, is Jesus Christ, and next to him stands the Apostle Paul.

6. In the preparation and delivery of your sermons, aim alone at pleasing God and saving souls.

7. A preacher without faith is like a statue without heart and eyes, and a sun without light and warmth; yea, like a sword without an edge, and a body without a soul.

8. Preach to yourself before you preach to others, and your exhortation will impress your hearers with double power.

9. The evangelical sermon is a living and experimental witness of Christ as the only and all-sufficient Saviour of sinners, for the awakening and edification of those who hear it. It is not mere teaching and exhortation, but the communication of the Christian life. What comes from the heart goes to the heart, and life begets life.

10. The true sermon has an anointing of the Holy Spirit, which accomplishes more than either learning or eloquence.

11. Each sermon should be the work both of the study and the pulpit. At home, under the influence of silent prayer and faithful study, it is begotten; in the church, under the stimulous of the inspiring countenances of attentive hearers, it is born.

12. Never preach without earnestly and thorough preparation, if you can possibly get time. Thus alone will you grow daily in richness of thought and the power of delivery. True industry never goes unrewarded, but indolence can claim no promise.

13. He who accustoms himself too early to extemporizing, and relies upon his own powers, will soon exhaust his store, and weary both himself and his auditors.

14. In your preparations examine first the text, together with the best standard literary aids within your reach, among which the Bible itself is the best, then select the principal thought for your theme, and divide it into its necessary parts. A simple, clear, and well-disposed arrangement constitutes already half the sermon. Frequently, however, the theme is first chosen, and the text to suit it selected afterwards.

15. The Bible is astonishingly rich in texts for all possible themes which are appropriate to the pulpit, and tend to edification.

16. The text should not be merely the motto, but the life-blood and soul of the whole discourse.

17. The different parts must not be united externally and mechanically, but they ought, if possible, to grow out of each other from an internal necessity, so that the whole sermon might constitute a living organism.

18. Never forget the old proverb that the Word of God is like an oderiferous plant, which imparts the stronger fragrance the more it is rubbed, and like a richly laden fruit-tree, which, the more it is shaken, the more fruit it yields.

19. Do not permit yourself to be unnecessarily disturbed and distracted before going into the pulpit, but lock yourself up in your closet, so that your discourse may receive, through prayer and the concentration of your mind, the baptism of the spirit of fire.

20. Forget every thing in the pulpit except God and the salvation of sinners.

21. Remember every time you preach that it may be the last opportunity which your hearers may have of hearing the word of life and saving their souls.—Rev. Dr. Schaff.

Prayerless Parents.

Prayerless parents! Your irreligion may prove your children's ruin. They might have been within the fold of the Saviour by this time, had not you hindered them when entering in. That time when God visited your family with a heavy stroke, they were thoughtful for a season, but there was no church in your house to give a heavenly direction to that thoughtfulness, and it soon died away. That evening, when they came home from the Sabbath-school, so serious, if you had been a pious father or mother, you would have taken your boy aside, and spoken tenderly to him, and asked what his teacher had been telling him, and you would have prayed with him and tried to deepen the impression. But your children came in from the church or school and found no church in their father's house. Their hearts softened, but your worldliness soon hardened them. The seed of the kingdom was just springing in their souls, and by this time might have been a rich harvest of salvation; but in the atmosphere of your ungodly house the tender blade withered instantly. Your idle talk, your frivolity, your Sunday visitors, your prayerless evenings ruined all. Your children were coming to Christ, and you suffered them not. And you will not need to hinder them long. The carnal mind is enmity against God; but no enmity so deep as theirs who were almost reconciled and then drew back. You drove your children back. You hardened them. They may never more be moved. They may grow up as prayerless and ungodly as yourself. If God should change yourself, they may soon be too hard for your own tears and entreaties. If you die as you are, their evil works will follow you to the world of woe, and pour new ingredients into your own cup of wrath. Oh! think of these things. A prayerless house is not only a cheerless one, but it is a guilty one; for where God is not, there Satan is.

Christ Alone.

"Men and brethren, what shall we do?" These are the words of men who are at a total loss; it is the voice of poor, distressed souls, that saw themselves in misery, but knew not, saw not, nor could devise any way of escape from it, by any thing they could do for themselves, or any other creature for them. And hence the Apostle uses that emphatic word, "Shut up to the faith," as men besieged and distressed in a garrison in time of a storm, when the enemy pours in upon them through the breaches and overpowers them. There is but one sally-port or gate, at which they can escape, and to that they all throng, as despairing of life, if they take any other course. Just so do men's convictions besiege them, distress them, beat them off from all their holds and intrenchments, and bring them to a pinching distress in themselves, shutting them up to Christ as the only way of escape. Duties can not save me; reformation can not save me, nor angels, nor men can save me; there is no way but one—*Christ*, or condemnation for-

ever. I thought once, that a little repentence, reformation, restitution, and a stricken life might be a way to escape wrath to come, but I find the bed is too short, and the covering to narrow. All is but loss, dung, dross, in comparison with Jesus Christ. If I trust to those *Egyptian reeds*, they will not only fail me, but pierce and wound me too; I see no hope within the whole horizon of sense.—JOHN FLAVEL.

Beginning Family Prayer.

THE commencement of this sacred and delightful duty must often be attended by difficulties where the head of the family has for years neglected it. "I have never done any thing since I became a Christian," writes one, "which required so much self-denial, and which was so truly a bearing of the cross, as beginning family worship. I felt that it was a duty from the time that I devoted myself to the service of Christ; but I shrunk from its performance so painfully, that day after day and week after week passed away without my attempting it. At length conscience remonstrated so loudly, and my conviction that it was a sin to neglect it so long was so strong, I determined to make the effort to perform it the next morning, cost what it would. It occasioned me a wakeful night; again and again I implored strength from on high. I was constitutionally timid, and when the morning came was much agitated.

"Before breakfast I said to my wife: 'I feel, C., as if we ought to have prayer in the family. We all have souls to be saved, and need God's blessing. I am sure you will not object to it.' 'No,' she replied; but the tone in which she said it was not encouraging. When we rose from the breakfast-table it seemed to me the children had never been so noisy before, and it required an effort to request them to keep silence and be seated. They did so, but I felt that their eyes were fixed wonderingly on me. I took the large Bible from the shelf and sat down. I wished to preface the service with some remarks, but I could not trust my voice, and I opened the book and read the first chapter that presented itself. I then knelt, and with faltering voice began to address the Creator. But my hesitation soon passed off. I know not why it was, but during the performance of the service my soul was so filled with thought's of God's great goodness in permitting me to approach him, and to place myself and those dear to me under the shelter of his protecting love, that I forgot the presence of others, and poured out my heart in supplications for his blessing with as much freedom and fervor as I had ever done in secret. When I arose I perceived my wife's eyes were moistened with tears.

"The conflict was over, the duty was entered on, and the peace which follows the consciousness of having done right came into my heart. Prayer with my beloved ones was no longer a burden, but a delightful privilege; and ere long I had the satisfaction of knowing that the heart of my companion ascended in full unison with my own to the throne of grace. I can now speak freely in my family of the value and sweetness of this service, and to many of them I believe the hour of prayer has become one of the most highly prized of all the day brings us."

Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." —Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace." —Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON V.

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THE CORONATION OF LOVE IN THE SOUL.

"And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."—1 Cor. 13: 13.

The Coronation of Love! What a glorious subject! May the spirit of glory and of God rest upon us! Amen. And let all the people say, Amen—yea, let all the people say, Amen.

We have reason to pray thus—all of us reason to pray thus—and to pray with all humility and all fervor, for without the Spirit we are nothing, and can do nothing, and can become nothing. It is delightful to think, and delightful to feel, and delightful to speak, and delightful to hear, when the thoughts are God's, and the sympathies are God's and the words are God's; but the things of God must come from God, and it is the plan of God to reveal "them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

* Delivered in the Capitol, Sunday, May 4th, 1862.—One of a Series.

The coronation of love. Not the destruction of faith. Not the destruction of hope. Not the suspension or impairment of either. And yet, how often is it said, that faith and hope may accompany love to the very gate of heaven, but can not enter there. How often is it sung:

"The atonement of Thy blood apply,
'Till faith to sight improve,
'Till hope in full fruition die,
And all my soul be love."

Where did this notion of the fugitive nature of faith and hope originate, and what is its sanction? Is this one of the thoughts of God, and is it any where honored with the authority of God? If so, let it so be shown. Meantime, it may at least be affirmed, that the noble chapter before us gives it no encouragement. Though sanctified to the great purpose of celebrating the excellence of love, it does not carry its comparisons so far as to make this grace the immortal survivor of its associates. It teaches, indeed, as we have seen, that miraculous gifts and ecclesiastical offices shall pass away. It teaches, moreover, that all the infirmities among Christians, occasioned by these temporal distinctions, shall come to an end; that every element of envy, and pride, and vanity, and rudeness, and selfishness, and resentment, and suspicion, and guile, shall perish. It teaches, also, that prophecies shall fail, and tongues cease, and knowledge vanish away. But it does not teach that faith or hope, shall die. Instead of this, it explicitly, emphatically, and most impressively declares, in the text now before us—this last verse summing up the force of the whole chapter—"And now *abideth* faith, hope, love, these three: but the greatest of these is love."

I am aware that the passage is sometimes read with this emphasis: "And *now* abideth faith, hope, love;" that is, as it is inferred, "these three" graces abide together in the Church on earth; "but, the greatest of these is love," because, as the construction proceeds, faith and hope are confined to the Church on earth, whereas love shall ascend to the eternal felicities of the Church in heaven. But love does not need such a poor apology as this for the illustration of its superiority. Its greatness is not like that of an Oriental despot, requiring the sacrifice of kindred for the maintenance of its own supremacy. No, no. The nearest to its throne are the most loyal to its scepter, and their existence is as precious as its own.

Let us cheer ourselves, therefore, with a better reading. Hark! "Abideth;" that is, in contrast to all the fugitive phenomena noticed in the preceding verses of the chapter. "And now abideth;" that is, and now, in conclusion of what has been said about fleeting things, I have the pleasure of assuring you of some things

that are stable—some things which are essential to the Church, and which, therefore, will continue to abide in it, irrespective of circumstances, whether on earth or in heaven, in time or in eternity. "And now abideth faith, hope, love"—of one of which I have already told you that it "never faileth," and the other two of which I now connect with it, as being alike permanent in their nature. "And now abideth faith, hope, love—these three." See; neither less nor more than "these three." Remember the distinctive, inseparable, and interminable union of "these three." "And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love;" that is, the greatest, not in duration, but in nature and influence; the highest, happiest, and mightiest of principles; the sovereign power of the sinless and deathless universe.

I am the more pleased with this understanding of the text, because there is a clear and rich philosophy in it, as well as an apparently Divine authority.

Our spiritual constitution has three distinctions—intellectual, sentimental, and emotional. We expect these distinctions to be perpetuated in the world to come. An emotional existence alone would be a blind existence. An emotional and sentimental existence, without intellect, would be only like adding a dream to a sense—a phantasmagoric consciousness. An emotional and intellectual existence, without sentiment, would lack a sympathetic connection; their transitions would resemble a change from day to night, or from night to day, without the intervening softness and beauty of the morning and evening twilight. The ideal of our nature demands the union of the three elements—reason, imagination, and affection; or, as previously stated, the powers of intellect, sentiment and emotion.

What, then, can be so consistent or agreeable as the anticipation of the continued cultivation of faith, hope, and love? These are the proper correspondents of the constitutional distinctions I have named. Faith is the glory of intellect, hope is the glory of sentiment, and love is the glory of emotion. Faith fills the reason with truth, hope fills the imagination with beauty, and love fills the affections with joy.

It is easy to invent interesting trinities; and perhaps there is some danger of delusion in such exercises. But this is one that occurs by inspiration, agrees with philosophy, and seems only to ask attention to make it equally pleasing and useful.

It is somewhat like the Trinity in the Divine nature. This is personally expressed by the terms, Father, Son and Spirit. Again, it seems to be impersonally designated by the words, Love, Wisdom, and Power. Something like a transition, also, is intimated between the first and second of these, by means of the third. The Spirit proceeds from the Father to the Son; Power comes forth from Love, in aid of Wisdom.

And is there not something of a similar character in all the range of nature? Do we not every where see, instead of an abrupt, immediate exchange of extremes, a gentle, mediatorial transition? Why is the earth covered with verdure, but because of the crumbled mold between the rocks below and the growth above? And does not the softness of spring interpose between the last frosts of winter and the first fires of summer? And again, does not the blue haze of the autumn intervene between the last fires of summer and the first frosts of winter? Look even at a single fruit-tree. Is there not first the form, then the beauty, and then the use? There stands an apple-tree, for instance—a dark, gaunt form, stripped by the winter, leafless and unsightly. Will it all at once, suddenly, fill its branches with fruit, and so accomplish its ultimate purpose, without the mediation of beauty? Not at all. Even its bark will gather somewhat of renewed greenness, and the delicate leaves will unwrap themselves from their foldings, and the more delicate blossoms cover it all over with their damask hues, sweetening the sunny air, and attracting the humming-birds and honey-bees to its boughs, now desolate, before the first bulb of the future ripeness shall make its appearance.

And what now? Is not man correspondent with nature? Nay, is not man the image of God? If, then, there be a form, a bloom, and a use in nature; a love, a wisdom, and a power in God; a sort of divine system of transition by meditation; shall the immortality of man be reduced to the single attribute, the absolute simplicity of emotion? Surely not. His spirit shall retain for ever its three great distinctions—intellect, sentiment, and emotion; or, reason, imagination, and affection; or, truth, beauty, and joy; or, in the language of the text, "faith, hope, and love." The perfection of each will be found in the union of all. Faith will not be cold, nor hope delusive, nor love blind. Truth will illuminate joy, and joy will animate truth, by the undeceptive vision of undecaying beauty.

Even nature requires of man faith in the unchangeable, hope in the improvable, and love for the useful. In like manner, God requires of man, faith in his wisdom, hope in his power, and the return of love for love. Even the progress of personal and social existence makes the same requirement—faith in the past, hope for the future, and love for the present.

In a word, "these three" seem to be constitutional distinctions, and there is no warrant in the chapter, or any where else, for the supposition of any essential change in our constitution. Gifts, offices, infirmities, prophecies, tongues, knowledge—any thing and everything that is merely conditional may pass away, but nothing that is constitutional. The thoughts, and imaginings, and utterances of childhood, as we have seen, may be put away, but not the powers which produce them. The powers of the man are the

same as those of the child, only developed, enlarged and improved. And so, spiritually, at least, the powers of the saint in heaven, are the same as those of the man on earth—only, in like manner, still farther developed, enlarged, and improved. Faith, at last, is free from doubt, and hope from fear, and love from grief.

Such of my hearers as are familiar with the history of Intellectual Philosophy, need no new information, to assure them of the fact, that, after all its proud, and often infidel, and sometimes blasphemous speculations, it has been forced, by the utter exhaustion of every thing else, to take off its sandals and venture upon the holy ground of religion, and seek refuge in the law of faith, or belief. Even the theory of knowledge first and belief afterwards, has been made to yield to the theory of belief first and knowledge afterward. We must believe in order to know, is now the approved doctrine; and the meaning is, we must confide in the fidelity of our organs for the acquisition of knowledge, before we can be satisfied that we really and truly know anything. "All things have their root in belief," said Luther, three centuries ago, speaking as much in the spirit of a philosopher as of a theologian. And now, even the Transcendentalists of Germany, as well as the Common Sense school of Scotland, and the Eclectics of all nations, seem disposed to unite in the same acknowledgment. This confidence in our faculties, it would appear, must be as necessary to us in heaven as on earth. We are bound to suppose, indeed, that there, this kind of faith, as well as our faith in God and nature, instead of being lost, will be perfected and confirmed forever.

As to hope, unless the very notion of a future perish, it must be hopefully contemplated; for, to the inhabitants of heaven, at least, there will be nothing to fear.

As to love, there is no doubt about that; so that, altogether, I trust it will not be regarded as taken for granted, if I now conclude that we may rely upon the text as meaning: "And now," in review of all, I announce that "faith, hope, and love, these three," "abide" together, essential principles of our redeemed and sanctified nature, forever and ever; but still, whether on earth or in heaven, in time or in eternity, at the Cross below or at the Throne above, "the greatest of these is love."

What, then, remains? If faith, and hope, and love, are alike immortal, qualifying us, by their interchanging modifications of consciousness, for self-communion, and natural communion, and social communion, and divine communion, we have only to ask, Of "these three," which is "the greatest?"

This is no idle or invidious inquiry. It is not like the ancient question, "Who shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" It is rather, "What is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" It is not like many a modern asking, Who shall be greatest in the Church? or, Who shall be greatest in the State? It is more like

the perpetual solicitude of the awakened sinner, or the imperfect believer, What shall I do to be saved? What is of first and chief importance to the recovery of the perfection of my nature? What is my highest nature, that my best attention may be given to its utmost improvement?

I answer: It is plain that our spiritual nature is higher than our material nature. In like manner, confining our view to our spiritual constitution alone, it is equally plain that our mental nature is higher than our sentimental nature, and that our moral nature is higher than our mental nature. Now, love is the highest law of our moral nature, and, of course, the proper controlling principle of our whole nature.

As it is with God, so it is with man—since man was made in the likeness of God. How, then, is it with God? Which is the highest nature of God? Not power, not wisdom, but love. Therefore, it is never said, God is power, or God is wisdom; but it is said, "God is love." So great is the excellency of love, even in the infinite nature of the Diety, that it is no wrong to his other perfections to make it expressive of his whole being. And so with man. It could not be said with propriety, Man is faith, or man is hope; but it might be said with all propriety, Man is love. "For love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." Surely, therefore, what is true of God himself, may be certainly affirmed of the child of God.

Again: There is a sense in which there may be faith without love, and hope without love. Devils may believe, and sinners may hope, without a single thrill of love. But the presence of love is proof of faith and hope also; proof of a purer faith and surer hope. In a word, love is the life of the whole nature; and the higher it rises, the more the entire man ascends with it toward all that is holy, and blissful, and sublime.

What, then, is wanting but the CORONATION OF LOVE—a triple coronation—a coronation in the Soul, a coronation in the Church, a coronation in Heaven.

Are you surprised at this division? Does it prevent a desirable unity, and threaten a failure of effect? I can not help it. I speak not as a Grecian artist. I would rather speak as a Galilean fisherman. The honey may have been sweet on the lips of Plato, but what was that to the fire on the lips of Isaiah? The civic crown of Demosthenes may have been a fitting symbol of the glorious eloquence which won it; but what was that cold gold in comparison with the living glory on the brow of St. Peter? and what was that impassioned and splendid oration, when compared with the lightning and thunder of the Holy Ghost, flashing from the eyes and pealing in the voice of the inspired Apostle, and glitter-

ing in the minds and reverberating in the consciences of thousands of the murderers of Jesus, trembling with their guilt, and crying in their dread, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" Oh! give me rather one inspiration of the power that saves, than all the pomp of speech that ministers merely to personal renown.

Alas! that the silver trumpet should be soiled with streaming tears, before it sounds its summons to the pageant of the occasion. And yet, who can remember, without weeping? The soul—the godlike soul. To speak of it only since the advent of Christ, who can remember its history without being ready to weep even tears of blood?

Think for a moment of the soul of Jesus. Was not that the paragon for all the souls of after time? And what was it that wore the crown in the soul of Jesus? Was it not love? I will not extend the metaphor into an allegory. I will not expand the soul into a palace; transform its faculties into persons; and its silent ascendency of love into the tumult of a royal exhibition. There is no true sympathy in such formal perversions. I wish to be personal; to cleave to the soul itself; and appeal for an interest in its quickest and deepest energies.

What then? Having touched the passing trope, in relation to the spirit of the Lord Jesus, I now ask: What has been the history of the individual man, since the advent of our Redeemer? What has been this history within the range of Christendom? What was it, before the dark ages? What was it, through the dark ages? What has it been, ever since the dark ages? What is its current history? I can not say much of the lowly man—the man of the masses. In most ages, there is great obscurity in this relation. Where we can not see clearly, it is at least most pleasant to indulge favorable suppositions. But, the man of mark, whatever his sphere, the man who holds a place in the annals of time, what has worn the crown in his soul, since the example of Jesus was set before him?

Alas! this abstraction is almost as unsympathetic as an allegory. I mean the public men of the past, whether in church or state. I mean all men of the present, public and private; for we are able to form some judgment of these. I mean, in particular, ourselves. What has worn the crown in their souls? What now wears it in our souls? Has it been love? Is it love? Pure, holy, heavenly love? Divine love? The love that burns for the glory of God? The love that delights in doing good to mankind?

I tell you why I am ready to weep. I am an admirer of great men. I can not help it. True, I do not idolize them; God forbid. I would not dishonor Christianity, by apologizing for their vices. God forbid, may be again said, most reverently. I would not submit my own judgment, or conscience, or conduct, or rights, or liberties of any kind, to the greatest of them. But still, a truly great

man, however little he may be to his Creator, is the most splendid of all creation to us.

I look, then, over the history of the great men whom God has sent into the world, since his own perfect Son showed us all how to live. I see them, in many instances, so great that they seem to overshadow the Lord Jesus himself. Nay; do not be startled. I am bound to speak honestly and earnestly. I say, therefore, again, that, sometimes, to my own mind, these great men appear to be so great as almost to overshadow the Lord Jesus himself. They are great in genius—all kinds of genius; artistic, scientific, philosophic, poetic, oratoric, civil, military—every sort that can be named. They are equally great in all kinds of learning. They are equally great in noble and successful enterprises. They secure the control of their cotemporaries, and are certain of the applause of posterity. Fame, and wealth, and pleasure, and power, absolutely kneel down and worship them. The arts multiply their images, until, it may be, they even outnumber the gods of heathenism; and Christian nations, grown familiar with their lives, seem insensible to their crimes, and only responsive to the celebration of their praise.

Now, when I turn to the contemplation of the Lord Jesus, I do not witness the same displays of genius and learning, to say the least; nor the same kind of popular or national enthusiasm in his favor, in his own day, or even in the present.

But now I ask myself the question, How did these men live? Did they live like Jesus? Can their lives be summed up in the words—"They went about doing good?" Was it holy love that wore the crown in their souls? And instantly my spirit kindles with indignation, and then melts into grief. No; it was not love that wore the crown. Oh! if love had reigned, what good they might have wrought. But it was not love. Nor yet was it even what at first it might appear to be. It was not, for instance, genius, or learning, or sensual lust, after all. It was self, the anti-christ of self; and genius, and learning, and lust, and avarice, and wealth, and office, and rank, and fame, and power, and pleasure, and opportunity, and temptation, and every thing within their command, was made to bow down and minster to the idolatry of self.

With all? Has it been so with all? No, not with all. Thank God, there have been many and noble exceptions. I need not name them. Their example adorns the earth, and is not forgotten in heaven. But it should not have been so with any. The law of Christianity runs thus: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die we are the Lord's." In relation to true Christians, this is so by voluntary devotion; and in the sense of responsibility

it is so, even in relation to merely nominal Christians. No man, however lofty and illustrious, has any right, under Christianity, to live to himself. He is bound to live in love to God and man. He is bound to live and die in the grateful service of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is again said, that Christ "died for all, that they which live"—that is, live because he died for them—"should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again." Even if Christ were still dead, there would be reason, supposing the other facts true, to revere his memory, and respect his precepts, but he lives and reigns, and commands homage, and the highest among men is as much bound, or even more bound, than the lowest, to render it. Who, then, can think of the ingratitude and selfishness of the great without weeping?

But, if I admire great men, more emphatically I love all mankind—the middle classes, the lower classes, all classes; the poorest of the poor, and the vilest of the vile. Who, then, with such feelings can recall the history of these as far as it may be recalled, or observe their condition, at the present time, without grieving for their want of love? How can we identify ourselves with them without sorrowing that we have so little of this divine principle in our souls?

Within this range, there is no great genius, no great learning, no great fame, or wealth, or power; no great national enterprise, or influence, or enthusiasm. There is general respectability, intelligence, refinement, competence, independence, comfort, external morality, patriotism, and impulsive philanthropy; with an undergrowth of occasional virulent poverty, and ignorance, and passion, and vice, and crime, and woe.

Ah me! why is it that love has been dishonored here? These are the classes with which Jesus identified himself. He was content, so to speak, that the great men of the world should seem to eclipse him, that he might appear more fully as a man of the people, and inspire them, if practicable, with his own spirit.

He "took upon himself the form of a servant" that he might show his love, and persuade men to imitate his example. It was not genius, or learning, or fame, or wealth, or power, that men needed, but love. If genius had been needed, what infinite genius he might have displayed. If learning had been needed, what infinite erudition he might have disclosed. If fame had been needed, how gladly the trumpets of angels would have challenged the applause of the world in his behalf. If wealth had been needed, how quickly the treasuries of the universe would have been open to meet his demands. And, if power had been needed, how easily his throne might have been exalted above all the kingdoms and empires of the earth.

But, no. It was love, love, love, that was wanted; and therefore he came to exemplify love, and illustrate love, and inculcate

love, and refresh, and revive, and redeem the wicked, and weary, and wasted world with love.

Oh! why have not the people so understood it? And why have they not united in the enthronement of love?

Alas! in their hearts, too—in our hearts, too—self has been enthroned. Whether we have possessed little or much, it has been made to minister—not to God, not to Christ, not to the Church, not to any objects of holy love, but to self—the antichrist of self—equally repulsive in the small as in the great.

We have looked upon the great, in their worldly glory, rather than upon Christ in his spiritual glory. And if we could not equal them, we have, at least, envied them, and tried to be as proud as they, and as vain as they, and as rude as they, and as selfish as they, and as resentful as they, and as suspicious as they, and as full of guile as they; in few words, as foolish, and sinful, and injurious, and wretched as they.

Ah! why have we not looked at Jesus? We might have become like him. He does not proudly assume what we never can reach, and then say: Stand aloof, for you see you can never resemble me. No, no! Though "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," he comes to us "in the form of a servant," and says to us, gently and kindly: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." That is, become each one of you a servant, even as I am; be meek and lowly as I am; and so you shall find rest. You may not think so; but believe me, and try it, and so you will find it. "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Try it, and you will find it so. Why, the very shadow of the world's yoke is heavier than the whole weight of mine. That is the yoke of self, and self is a task-master that cuts to the bone. My yoke is the yoke of love; and love is the angel of God that leads his children in safe and blessed disguise from the bondage of earth to the liberty and rapture of heaven.

Oh! tell me, then, brethren and friends; tell me, one and all, if love has so long been dishonored, is it not high time to repair the wrong? Shall we not recall the exile? Shall we not vindicate her rights? Shall we not restore her rights? Shall we not engage in the coronation of love in the soul?

It must be so. The soul is desolated with rebellion and misrule that does not acknowledge this reign. What, shall appetite, or passion, or pride, or vanity, or ambition, or genius, or learning, or self, in any of its forms, wear the crown of the soul, and love—the equal friend of God and man—be excluded from her rightful dominion? See to it, sinner! See to it, that, by the grace of God, you break this bitter bondage.

And you, O Christian! hear me a word or two more. Why, even if faith be present, love is greater than faith. Even if

hope be present, love is greater than hope. What then? Shall we content ourselves with faith, and neglect love. Or, shall we listen to the music of hope, and despise the pleadings of love. Never. See! faith welcomes love to the throne. See! hope unites in this happy welcome.

But beware, or self, after all, will prevent the coronation. If love put on the crown, be sure it will not be in vain. If love put on the crown, be sure it will fulfill its obligations to both God and man; to both Christ and the Church. It matters not at what expense; time, or toil, or means; prayers, or pains, or tears; whatever sacrifices are necessary, love will be sure to ordain them. Self knows this, and self will prevent the enthronement of such a sovereign if it can.

But one word more. I have said that faith and hope may enter heaven. But this was in company with love, not without it. Faith and hope may not entirely forsake you here, even though you slight the claims of love; but when you leave the earth, if love be not enthroned in your soul, faith and hope will bid you farewell for ever.

SERMON VI.

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THE CONVERSION OF LITTLE CHILDREN.

"SUFFER the little children to come unto me."—MARK 10: 14.

THESE words of Christ imply that some one was hindering little children from coming to him; and this we find to be the case. Those disciples, who should have been foremost in introducing both young and old to their Master, had just been rebuking some who brought young children to him. We do not know why the disciples did so. It has been suggested that they regarded the presence of the children as an interruption of the Saviour's teachings. They could not bear that those who were too young to be taught should take up the Saviour's time. It may be that some of them were too young to be taught, but, if so, it was no worse for them to be there than for some others who were too old to be taught. Very likely some of them were too young to understand much that Christ said, but they were not too young to have him put his hands on them, and pray (for that is what he did to them);

not too young to gaze into his glorious face and take one indelible impression from it; not too young to be "blessed," for we read: "He took them up in his arms, and put his hands upon them and blessed them." Those little ones in his arms may have got more good than some profound minds have from hearing a hundred Gospel-sermons and reading the Bible through and through.

The disciples were hindering children from entering the kingdom of heaven; and we read that, "When Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Christian friends, it is possible that we stand guilty of keeping little children from coming to Jesus. Not that we have ever formed a deliberate purpose to do so, but we may have adopted opinions which prevent our praying and laboring directly for their conversion. Since Jesus left the world in body, the Holy Spirit, in a sense, takes his place. We can not come to Jesus in person, or bring others, but the Holy Spirit brings us in heart to Jesus, by his renewing grace. Now, if we adopt the notion that little children are too young to be regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and if we therefore fail to use the appropriate means for their conversion, we are acting over the part of those rebuked disciciples, and Jesus is "much displeased" with us.

My subject is, *The Conversion of Little Children.* What I shall attempt to prove is this: that we ought to strive for and look for the conversion of young children; and by young children I do not mean those ten or twelve years of age. They ought to have been Christians long ago. I mean those from six or eight years old and under. I do not attempt to fix the lower limit.

Now, lay aside those impressions on this subject which are merely the result of habit; do not say: "It is preposterous to think of that little, weak, ignorant, careless, laughing, crying child as a Christian." That is appealing, and indeed deceptively, to the imagination. Let us make our appeal to Christian truth.

I. I argue that little children are not too young to be converted, because they are not too young to do wrong. Parents, and all who have the care of children, will be ready to admit that wrong-doing commences very early in life. St. Augustine, who became a Christian in mature life, felt inclined to make confession for sins committed in his mother's arms. It is not necessary for the argument that we fix upon any definite time as the point where sin commences; nor that we make a sharp distinction between actual and "original or birth sin." It is certain that original sin in its origin was actual, and that actual sin has the early development and universality which stamp it as original. [redacted]

ascribe to litttle children, whatever else it may be called, is actual—obviously the only sin that anybody commits, whether young or old. Whatever may be our theory of infant depravity, or infant salvation, we believe that children do wrong when very young. They exhibit the same tendencies of temper and conduct, which in later life bring down upon them the condemnation of society and the penalties of civil law, and expose them to the fearful judgment of God. You may excuse their conduct a thousand times by saying that the "dear little things" don't know any better, but there comes a time in every family when you are confronted with indisputable evidence that those little souls are sinning. They do not sin on the same scale as you of mature mind, but they do it, as they do everything, in their way.

The argument, then, is this: When children are old enough to do wrong, they are old enough to do right. If they are not too young to sin, they are not too young to be converted. "But," you say, "how can I make them do right when they can not understand Christian instruction?" I did not say you could make them do right. Can you always make older persons do right? The question is not, what we can make them do, but what God has endowed them with, and what he can lead them to do. Do you believe that God has endowed a human being with the capacity for doing wrong, which is not also a capacity for doing right? "But the Fall has affected these children." So has it older persons no less. The idea that children are any more under the influence of the fall than adults, so that children must inevitably sin for a time before they attain the capacity for being converted, is monstrous. Yet the shadow, at least, of such an idea, seems widely to overspread the Christian community. We see how hard it is to give children intellectually clear ideas of religion, and hastily conclude that they must wait till they are able to understand our creeds before they become Christians. But, Christian parent, can you believe that your child is doing wrong every day of its life and yet is absolutely too young to have implanted within it a right principle of action? that it is old enough to incur God's frown, and not old enough to have his smile? old enough to be lost, and not old enough to be saved?

Perhaps you repel this argument because it implies that children may be lost. You prefer to think that none can be Christians, and that none need be in order to be saved. But you are seeking consolation where you have no right to go, and the consolation itself is inadequate, for how can you set the limit of responsibility, and how know that a child dies before that limit is reached? But you have no right to such consolation. There is nothing in the Bible that warrants our believing that the sins of childhood are pardoned in any different way from those of adult life. Your child must be saved by the blood of Christ and the renewing of

not too young to ... for a different way? impression from ... child for heaven; do "He took them ... and may not die in early blessed them." ... consolation for its possible good than some ... most useful to believe in Gospel-sermons ... live or die, that we may The disciples ... it is stated that Dr. Thomas dom of heaven ... striking case of disobedience, much displeasure ... coming against God, was overcome unto ... or its conversion with heart-God. We ... kingdom ...

Christians ... dren are not too young to be con-little children ... whether of children or adults, formed ... I grant that *you* can not control opinions ... and I add that you can not convert their ... It might also be granted, without Spirit ... that it is more difficult to apply the personal ... than to an adult, and yet we need not Jesus ... admission, for is there not as much hope little ... as of a man of fifty. It does not take any ... a very young mind as an older one. A cord ... a handful of earth, while a sturdy tree ... with its roots. Who can tell just how much ... the Spirit's saving work? A great deal of ... spent in chasing away doubts, which immature ... troubled with. Our additional knowledge, in ... keeps our moral balance, and enables us to ... like faith.

... let it stand admitted that a child's mind is ... to our intellectual efforts as a mature one; the ... what we can do, but what the Holy Spirit can do. ... greater difficulty in the Holy Spirit's converting ... in the conversion of an adult? What is needed in ... a new heart. Can you give a reason why the Spirit ... renew a little child's heart? If regeneration is the ... and is effected by our reasoning powers, we may ... little children. We must wait till their minds grow ..., though their hearts grow harder. Is it uncharitable to ... distrust and neglect of the Holy Spirit is at the bottom ... distrust of the conversion of children? When we realize ... we are Christians, we are "born of the Spirit," can we ... for a moment that the youngest can be born of the same ... As early as they can do wrong, can not the Spirit lead ... to do right? You can not change those hearts; but is ... a human soul, however young, to which its Author can not ...?

"But what can we do as the 'means of grace' to them?" Do as you do for older sinners; pray for the Holy Spirit to renew them, and then teach them what you can by precept and example. Have faith in the power of the Spirit. Without his blessing your efforts for any one are vain, and with his blesssing the youngest sinner can have a new heart. Then pray; pray before you can teach; pray while you teach, and "pray without ceasing." It "availeth much."

III. I argue that little children are not too young to be converted, because piety is a matter of the heart, rather than of the intellect. The kingdom of heaven is entered, not by solving any problem, but by yielding the heart—the will and the affections—to God. If we look at any large number of persons who give good evidence of piety, we find them differing widely from each other in intellectual capacity, in general knowledge, and in religious knowledge. But they agree in loving the Saviour. Christ's apostles, during his life, had narrow views of the way of salvation, but they were true disciples, all but Judas, who perhaps knew as much as any of them. Converts from heathenism, of adult age, many of them knew less of Bible truth than the very youngest Sunday-school scholar among us; but their hearts are changed.

Now, how is it with young children? They know very early how to love and to hate. Can you tell me why they can not love God as soon as they can love their parents? "But they can not see God." Neither can adult persons see God. They see him by faith—that is, they believe strongly in his existence. Are you sure that little children can not have this faith? They do have it. They can not give you Paley's argument for the existence of God, but they can and do believe in him and love him. Many a little child has kneeled down and prayed to God with a faith that puts us all to shame. What says Christ in immediate connection with the text? "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." And how do we often describe our faith? We call it "child-like confidence." Shall we then distrust the capacity for piety of those who stand, by Christ's direction and our consent, as models of faith?

The truth is, that young children have many advantages for being Christians, over older persons, because they are all heart. They are naturally confiding; are free from reserve on the subject of religion; are tender-hearted; not troubled by those doubts that hinder and perplex adults, and are not so strongly under the power of evil habit. True, they do not know much about doctrines, the Atonement, the Divinity of Christ, and many other important things; but how much did the ancient patriarchs know about these things? And how much do we know about them? The imaginings of children respecting God

heaven, and hell, seems to us absurd, but hereafter will not our present notions of these subjects seem as childish and inadequate to us, as theirs do now? Then let us not feel above them, but take them with us, nay, follow them into the kingdom of heaven.

IV. Thus far we have reasoned on general grounds. Let us now consider some special examples and teachings, found in God's word.

Notice first the case of the prophet Samuel. He was a child given in answer to prayer, and devoted by his mother to the Lord from infancy. The way in which he is always mentioned in the Bible leaves no doubt that he was pious from earliest childhood. We read, "The child Samuel grew on and was in favor with both the Lord and also with men." Now, if a child, under the old dispensation, when none could tell him of a Jesus who took children in his arms and blessed them, and amid the corrupting influences of a society of which Eli's sons were leaders—if a child in such circumstances could grow up piously, how dare we even for a moment think of limiting God's grace toward children now, under the light of Christian truth, and the influence of a Saviour's example?

Notice the case of John the Baptist, of whom the angel said: "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb." This, indeed, refers to a special work of the Spirit qualifying him for the prophetic office, but without doubt, in his case that work included making him early a child of God. If then the Spirit so early found access in his heart, can he not find early access to hearts in our day?

I refer you next to the childhood of Jesus Christ. We do not know many particulars of it, but we know that he "knew no sin," and that therefore his childhood was a sinless one. He was, then, at this period of life, peculiarly a model for children as afterwards he was a model for all. If it is the work of grace to stamp his image on us, it is equally the work of grace to stamp the image of his childhood upon children. I have no doubt that when he took those little ones in his arms, he thought of his own infancy and childhood, and that the thought gave peculiar tenderness to his caresses, and prayers, and blessing. *He* could see their capability for being pious, whether his disciples could or not, for had not his own young heart throbbed with childhood's love for God? He could see where there was room for germs of piety to grow, and he knew how to cultivate them. "Stand off ye well-meaning but ignorant disciples; suffer the little children to come unto me. I became a child that I might win the children."

In regard to the special teachings on this subject, I need refer to only two occasions in the life of Christ. When children sang his praises in the temple, and the astonished and caviling priests

said: "Hearest thou what these say?" he replied "Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?"

The other occasion was that on which our text was spoken, which with its connection is a very clear and beautiful statement of the truth that little children may be Christians. "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of God." Whatever this may mean in regard to the salvation of infants too young to receive any instruction, or in regard to the covenant relation with believer's children, its most obvious meaning is that "little children" are old enough to be interested in Christ, and to have a Christian disposition. Jesus refers expressly to their way of receiving the kingdom of God, as a model for others. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." This can not mean that we should receive it as a depraved, corrupt, unconverted little child, but that we must come to Christ with the humble, trustful spirit with which a little child comes to him. We must reverse our lives; cast off the vile additions made to our character; return to the simplicity and humility of childhood, and thus receive Christ. How strongly does this present the truth that even very young children can be the sincere and hearty followers of Jesus. Why should we become like little children, if they have not a peculiar aptitude for piety?

The idea that our Saviour in these words has no reference to real piety in children, but merely refers to them, as he might to the lambs, for rhetorical illustration, hardly deserves a serious refutation. He could not have been very "much displeased" with the disciples, nor could their repentence have been very deep, if they had been guilty only of excluding from the Saviour's presence a happy illustration.

V. It is a pleasing confirmation of our faith in very early piety, to observe the many instances, within our own knowledge and observation, of the conversion of young children, and of their teachable spirit with reference to religion. I do not suppose that every thing which passes for child-piety is genuine, but even those childish prayers which are quoted as mere matter for remark, are often little sprouts of piety which God means to have cultivated and trained; not clipped off and killed by neglect. If you are accustomed to read children's religious papers, you have found many illustrations of the piety of young children. It would be pleasant to quote examples, and very easy to fill a sermon with such, but I will not detain you with these, and partly because many regard them as mere curiosities—instances of religious precociousness. Such a view is, I believe, far from the truth, and springs from the same notion that the Apostles had, that religion

is not for children; but it may be more to the purpose to remind you that the labors of Rev. E. P. Hammond are eminently blessed among children. He approaches them with the utmost faith in their capacity to become Christians, and many young hearts have been given to Jesus as the fruit of his faith and zeal. A little boy, just converted, writes to him: "I love Jesus. I love to read my Bible. I love to go to meeting. I love Christians." Is there anything in those four sentences above the capacity of a child old enough to read?

Some of you, perhaps, will not need to go to books and papers, but have laid up in the most sacred recess of a parent's heart, tearful memories of little ones, now saints in heaven, that came to Jesus and received the "kingdom of God as a little child."

The influence of such examples is awakened in many minds by the fact that some who in very early life give evidence of faith, on growing up appear to lose it entirely and require regeneration as much as any one. How shall we explain this? In the first place, we must remember that neither children nor adults always hold out in apparent piety. We should not expect more in this respect from the young than the old. In the next place, children have not learned self-inspection, and it requires skill to interpret their characters rightly. We should not condemn their piety because we blunder in examining it. But the chief explanation is to be found, I think, in this, that parents neglect to train the piety of their young children, because they have no faith in its existence. There is an interval between the early years when "Now I lay me down to sleep," is the carefully instilled prayer, and the age of twelve and fourteen, during which Christian parents cease to watch over the private devotions of their children, appearing to think that these helpless lambs must pass through a period when they are too old to be carried in the bosom, and too young to go alone. What wonder that piety so neglected fails to show itself? What wonder that, when in time of revival these children are reawakened, the unfaithful parent can not see evidence of a previous regeneration? Such cases should not destroy our confidence in children's piety, but in parental fidelity.

I have, in so many ways, anticipated the practical application of this subject, that it would be unsuitable to dwell long upon it in closing.

You who are Sunday-school teachers may learn that your pupils, however young, are old enough to be true Christians.

You who are young, but older than "little children" may learn that you have already refrained too long from entering the kingdom of heaven.

But the main lesson is for parents. God has made you the [redacted]ive guardians of their very early years. Before your [redacted]derstand the instruction that comes from this pul-

pit, or even enter the youngest class in the Sunday-school, they may be brought by you to Jesus. Do not decline this peculiar responsibility. You need not delay until you perceive clearly the moral character of the child. Begin as soon as the new life is placed in your hands, for your first work is prayer. Do you believe in a prayer-hearing God? Do you believe in the Holy Ghost? Then pray that the Holy Ghost may take possession of that young heart. Give up your child to God. Banish every selfish thought, and beseech God daily to take and bless and use your child for his glory. Do not pray that this may be done at some remote future time. Pray that the Spirit may guide the earliest unfoldings of intelligence and character.

Then add to prayer such effort as is adapted to impress and guide young souls. Teach your children to pray. Do not say that they are unable to pray aright, but implore the Spirit to make them feel what their young lips utter.

Do not be slow to believe that your prayers are answered and your efforts blessed. Accept thankfully evidence that God gives you of the beginnings of piety, and set yourselves to train that piety into every Christian excellence. Yet do not expect maturity of character. The conversion of children does not convert them into old people. Do not be discouraged if they do wrong. How is it with adult Christians? Do they not do wrong? But they repent. Teach young children to repent. In reliance on the Spirit teach them every Christian duty. Above all, teach them by example. Let them hear you pray. Imitate Christ in this respect. Let them see your good works. Let your looks as well as words impress them. Warm their hearts with your fervent Christian love before they can even lisp the name of Jesus.

Be induced to do all this by your love for their souls. Perhaps you feel sure of their salvation if they die young; but how if they live? Unless they are regenerated when "little children" do you see any security against a life of irreligion and an eternity of woe? Some of you have a covenant with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, respecting these children. Does that covenant require you to wait for many years for its fulfilment on God's part? Make trial, by your faithfulness, and see.

I address some parents who do not profess to be Christians. Who shall lead your children to Christ if not you? If you are not pious let this be a motive for your becoming so. In order to bless your children you must pray for them; and if you have never prayed before, now is the time to begin. You must also teach them the way of the Lord; and if you have not yet learned the lesson, now is the time to begin. You must set them a pious example, and by your love for them be persuaded to do so. Do you ask, how shall I begin? I point you to the family altar. Have you one? If not, till that is set up you can not hope to

lead your children to Jesus. In view of its influence upon them dare you neglect it? What if, dear friends, in endeavoring to save your children you should yourselves be saved? Go then, and carry your dear ones to Jesus, and when you see them stretching out their little hands to him, do you also "receive the kingdom of God as a little child."

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

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Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting.

It is encouraging and gratifying to every Christian heart, far and near, to learn that this Bethel of prayer continues well attended—every day, every week, every month. Daily prayer ascends like a column of holy incense to heaven redolent of blessings. Here strangers meet from many parts of the land, and mingle their praises and prayers together in holy fellowship, and then go their way rejoicing. This prayer-meeting and the marked answers to prayer which are made known almost every day are a standing monument to the efficacy of prayer. Christians may well thank God and take courage when they read the history of this prayer-meeting in its weekly annals.

Personal Conversion. — The cases are numerous in which requests come from those who ask prayers for their own conversion. Often the writers say they have been seeking an interest in Christ for a long time, and have not been able to obtain it. They can not find their way to Christ. They feel that the burden of sin is heavy upon them, but they know not how it may be removed. They ask for prayers to this end.

What if impenitent persons in congregations in all parts of the land were to send to the minister in his pulpit or to the weekly prayer-meeting a written request for prayers for the conversion of his own soul. How stirring and quickening would be its influence on the hearts of Christians.

Hospital Prayer-Meeting.—In one of the daily prayer-meetings one of the speakers said he had visited a hospital for which we had often been asked to pray. He wished all this meeting could have been there. It was an affecting sight to see these men come hobbling down on their crutches and sticks in great numbers to attend the place of prayer. A more solemn prayer-meeting is not often attended. Great numbers were deeply moved during the meeting, and many tears were seen falling. Then when tattoo beat, which was a signal to close the service, you ought to have seen how anxious the men were that it should be extended. Some of the anxious men, after the meeting was dismissed, came round the minister

for religious instruction. One noble-looking Vermont soldier came up and confessed his anxiety to become a Christian, but he could not find his way to Jesus. It was all a mystery to his mind. The tears were coursing down his cheeks while he spoke of his perplexities.

The same speaker said he held a Testament in his hand. It was from the battle-field of Fredericksburgh. On one of the fly-leaves was this record: "Found on the battle-field of Fredericksburg, December 16th, at two A. M., while covering the evacuation of that place, by P. H. B. Taken from beside a dead body." There was evidence that this Testament had been read after the owner had been wounded. It was found lying open. On the fly-leaf in front is this inscription:

A Present to William Glover
From his Sister Maggy.
Read this often.

It was a beautiful gilt-edged Testament having a clasp on the lids, bearing the imprint of the American Bible Society of the year 1860.

THE LATE DR. CUTLER.—This eminent minister of Christ was leading this prayer-meeting one day, and a young man was seen sitting immediately in front of him in great distress of mind; so great that concealment was impossible. When the prayer-meeting was over he approached Dr. Cutler and said: "I have been an infidel all my days. Now I am persuaded the Bible must be true. Can you point me to any part of the Bible that reveals a salvation possible for such a sinner as I am?" Dr. Cutler immediately turned to some passages in John and invited him to read them. He read them aloud. "Is there any salvation there for such a sinner as you?" said the Doctor. "Oh! surely, surely, there is," said the young man; "I did not know that any such passages were in the Bible." This young man then and there seemed to turn his believing regard to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. He proved afterward to have then laid hold on the hope set before him in this Gospel. He changed the whole turn of his life from that day. Before he had been a writer of some ability in favor of infidelity, and contributed largely to the infidel periodicals of the day. Now he devotes himself to the upholding of the faith he once labored to destroy.

ANSWERS TO PRAYER.—A lady wrote to the prayer-meeting saying that she wished to return grateful acknowledgments to God for answers to prayer. Some time ago she sent requests for prayer for the conversion of her three children and for the divine keeping of her husband, a professor of religion, who was away in California. Since that time two daughters have been converted. And now she begs prayer to be continued for the conversion of her son.

Three several letters were read on the same day, giving intelligence of answers to prayer.

A young man said: "I think I ought to come with my thank-offering before God for his mercy in answer to prayer." He joined the Church when very young, as he now supposes, without any experimental knowledge of religion. When in college he became a complete apostate. His conversion he attributes to God in answer to the

prayer of a cousin, now dead, who had uncommon fervor in prayer.

QUICKENED SENSE OF SIN.—The numerous strangers which in the spring crowd this prayer-meeting adds interest and solemnity to the scene. The week of prayer still sheds abroad its benign influence. This is seen in the requests for prayer which indicate a highly quickened sense of sin and danger on the part of many who ask prayers for the conversion of others, and on the part of many who ask prayer for themselves. It is by no means uncommon for persons to state their anxieties for themselves dating with the week of prayer.

A YOUNG MAN ASKING PRAYER FOR HIMSELF.—He stood in the back part of the room. He had been standing through the meeting. Toward the close he said that he felt it was his duty to ask for prayer. He had for sometime felt his need of the salvation which is in Jesus Christ. He hoped the meeting would pray that he might be led into the exercise of faith in Jesus Christ.

A strange clergyman, as he appeared to be, arose on the instant and offered a singularly affecting and appropriate prayer. Many hearts responded to the earnest petition that this young man might at once embrace Christ as he is freely offered in the Gospel, and that he might go away saved from condemnation and sin through faith in Jesus Christ.

HOSPITAL CONVERSIONS.—By the wonderful mercy of God, many soldiers of the army will be converted and saved, who, had they remained at home, had died in impenitence. The chaplain of the hospital at York, Pa., says: "We have had here nearly three thousand patients since opening, about the first of July, 1862. We have been cheered by seeing quite a number turning to the Lord. Each month of this year I have baptized some, and added them to the general Evangelical Christian Church. Among them have been several young men of much promise, from New-York State. My humble experience, both in the regiment and in the hospital, has been that the *chaplaincy is not a failure*, as has been so oracularly announced. We have had many discouragements, and sometimes felt almost as if it was a failure; but this was often so before in a pastorate of fifteen years. I believe I have never admitted, within the same time, so many men to church privileges on their profession, as I have done within the last three months. To God's name be all the glory. We are quietly working on, and desire an interest in the prayers of God's people."

Clock of Conscience.

HAVE you ever heard of the great clock of St. Paul's in London? At mid-day, in the roar of business, when carriages, and carts, and wagons, and omnibuses go rolling through the street, how many never hear that great clock strike unless they live very near it. But when the work of the day is over, and the roar of business has passed away—when men are gone to sleep, and silence reigns in London—then at twelve, at one, at two, at three, at four, the sound of that clock may be heard for miles around—Twelve!—One!—Two!—Three!—Four! How that clock is heard by many a sleepless man. That clock is just like the con-

science of the impenitent man. While he has health and strength, and goes on in the whirl of business, he will not hear his conscience. He drowns and silences its voice by plunging into the world. He will not allow the inner man to speak to him. But the day will come when conscience will be heard, whether he likes it or not. The day will come when its voice will sound in his ears and pierce like a sword. The time must come when he must retire from the world, and lie down on the sick-bed, and look death in the face. And then the clock of conscience, that solemn clock, will sound in his heart, and if he has not repented will bring wretchedness and misery to his soul. Oh no! write it down in the tablets of your hearts—without repentance, no peace!

The Greatest Street-Preacher.

Archbishop Leighton, returning home one morning, was asked by his sister: "Have you been hearing a sermon?" "I've met a sermon," was the answer. The sermon he had met was a corpse on its way to the grave: the preacher was Death. Greatest of street-preachers! Nor laws nor penalties can silence him. No tramp of horses, nor rattling of carriages, nor rush and din of crowded streets can drown his voice. In heathen, Papal, and Protestant countries, in monarchies, and free states, in town and country, the solemn pomp of his discourses is going on. In some countries a man is imprisoned for even dropping a tract. But what prison will hold this awful preacher? What chains will bind him? He lifts up his voice in the very presence of tyrants, and laughs at their threats. He walks unobstructed through the midst of their guards, and delivers the messages which trouble their security and embitter their pleasures. If we do not meet his sermons still we can not escape them. He comes to our abodes, and taking the dearest objects of our love as his text, what terrible sermons does he deliver to us! Oh! what weeping audiences sometimes has this silent preacher! Yet there is a secret doctrine, an occult meaning running through his discourses, which is often not apprehended. Few "lay it to heart." His oft-repeated sermons still enforce the same doctrine, still press upon us the same exhortation. "Surely, every man walketh in a vain show. Surely, they are disquieted in vain. Here there is no continuing city. Why are you laboring for that which I will presently take from you and give to another? Take no thought for the morrow. Prepare to meet thy God."

God's Love.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3: 16.

Mr. Nott, missionary in the South Sea Islands, was on one occasion reading a portion of the Gospel of John to a number of the natives. When he had finished the sixteenth verse of the third chapter, a native who had listened with avidity and joy to the words, interrupted him and said: "What words were those you read? What sounds were those I heard? Let me hear those words again." Mr. Nott again read the verse, "God so loved," etc., when the native rose from his seat and said: "Is

that true? Can that be true? God love the world when the world not love him? God so love the world, as to give his son to die, that man might not die? Can that be true?" Mr. Nott again read the verse, "God so loved the world," etc., told him it was true, and that it was the message God had sent to them, and that whosoever believed in him would not perish, but be happy after death. The overwhelming feelings of the wondering native were too powerful for expression or restraint. He burst into tears, and as these chased each other down his countenance he retired to meditate in private on the amazing love of God, which had that day touched his soul; and there is every reason to believe he was afterward raised to share the peace and happiness resulting from the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

Whitefield's Experience.

"My mind being now more enlarged, I began to read the Holy Scriptures upon my knees, laying aside all other books, and praying over, if possible, every line and word. This proved meat indeed, and drink indeed, to my soul. I daily received fresh life, light, and power from above. I got more true knowledge from reading the Book of God in one month than I could ever have acquired from all the writings of men. In one word, I found it profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction; every way sufficient to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished for every good work and word. About this time God was pleased to enlighten my soul, and bring me into the knowledge of his free grace, and the necessity of being justified in his sight by faith only. Burkitt's and Henry's *Expositions* were of admirable use to lead me into this and all other Gospel truths."

To these habits of reading Whitefield added much secret prayer. "Oh! what sweet communion had I daily vouchsafed with God in prayer! How often have I been carried out beyond myself when meditating in the fields! How assuredly I felt that Christ dwelt in me and I in him, and how, daily, did I walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and was edified and refreshed in the multitude of peace!"

Rest, Weary Soul.

Rest, weary soul!
The penalty is borne, the ransom paid,
For all thy sins full satisfaction made;
Strive not thyself to do what Christ has done;
Take the free gift, and make the joy thine own.
No more by pangs of guilt and fear distrest—
Rest, sweetly rest.

Rest, weary heart!
From all thy silent griefs, and secret pain,
Thy profitless regrets and longings vain;
Wisdom and love have ordered all the past,
All shall be blessedness and light at last;
Cast off the cares that have so long oppprest—
Rest, sweetly rest.

Rest, weary head!
Lie down to slumber in the peaceful tomb,
Light from above has broken through its gloom,
Here, in the place where once thy Saviour lay,
Where he shall wake thee on a future day;
Like a tired child upon its mother's breast—
Rest, sweetly rest!

Rest, spirit free!
In the green pasture of the heavenly shore,
Where sin and sorrow can approach no more;
With all the flock by the Good Shepherd fed,
Beside the streams of life eternal led,
Forever with thy God and Saviour blest—
Rest, sweetly rest!

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SERMON VII.

BY REV. JOSEPH T. DURYEA.

ONE OF THE PASTORS OF THE COLLEGIATE DUTCH CHURCH NEW-YORK.

THE CRUCIFIXION AND ITS WITNESSES.

"AND sitting down they watched him there."—MATT. xxvii: 36*

WE behold the gospel in a single, comprehensive view when we stand before the cross of our dying Saviour. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners by his atoning death—this is the good news of salvation. It is true the gospel was announced in few and mysterious words in the garden, it was amplified in successive promises, it was typified in the economy of symbols and sacrifices, it was preached by the prophets, it was heralded by John, it was taught by Jesus. All this was indeed good news about salvation, but on Calvary is salvation itself. All that was revealed before was the gospel in word, but there is the gospel in substance—Christ dying for sinners. There, at Golgotha, the place of a skull, the eternal purpose is fulfilled, the everlasting plan accomplished. The Father's love is manifested, the grace of the Son is revealed, the power of the Spirit is applied. In one final, comprehensive manifestation, all that Jesus had said, and

* Sermon for Sacramental services.

felt and wrought, was brought to view. His deep words were not comprehended until that final explanation; his loving heart was not understood until it broke; his ministry was not apprehended until he bled a sacrifice of reconciliation; his kingdom was not conceived until he wore a crown of thorns. If you would understand salvation, come up to the hill of crucifixion; if you will know Jesus, stand beside the cross. They who were inspired to proclaim the first messages of redemption ever led the way to the death-scene, and turned the longing eye to Jesus there. They, indeed spake of the manger, of the Jordan, of the wilderness, of Bethany and Olivet and Jerusalem, of the temple and the garden; but these they pass swiftly by—lingering only at the last—that they might hasten on to Calvary. They preached Christ, but Christ crucified: they preached salvation through him, but by the cross. The sight of the dying Saviour is the regeneration of the sinner. He may see him speaking as never man spake, walking in holy example as never man walked; but all this does not reach his heart and meet his case. But when he sees the bleeding heart, his heart is melted. When he beholds the dying sacrifice, he dies to the world and sin. At the cross he lives the life which is by the faith of the Son of God. The Christian life is quickened by looking unto Jesus. But the scene in which the believing eye beholds him is always laid somewhere near the cross. The eye looks for the Master all along his weary, sorrowing way, from Jordan to Pilate's Hall for instruction and for guidance, but it is ever a way that leads up to the mountain of the cross. In duty and in suffering the look for the Master is always directed towards Gethsemane and the road that leads from Gabbatha, the place of the pavement to that sacred spot which was "nigh unto Jerusalem." And when in that strange throng that presses along the way of grief, the eye rests on one who bears a cross, faith tearfully exclaims, "Rabboni." But when, at last, the up-lifted form of the dying one is brought to view, and the wounded hands and side are seen all stained with atoning blood, and Pilate's words come ringing on the heavy air "Behold the man," then, then the Christian's love, and faith, and zeal, and hope reänimated and fired anew, find full expression in words of holy fervour, "My Lord and my God;" my life and my salvation! The life of faith and love, the life immortal begins at the cross; it goes to its fountain, day by day, by seeking anew the dying Master's presence. Faith comes away from its toils and its sorrows, its work and its burden, and sitting down before the cross, meekly folds its hands in meditation, prayer and praise, and lingers long and loves to linger, where sat the Gentile soldiers, of whom it is remembered that, "Sitting down they watched him there." To-day the Church invites the followers of the Saviour to come together to this solemn place. She repeats the Master's

words: "Remember me." Let us gather around our dying Lord.

To help our minds and hearts in this service of remembrance, let us gather up the sketches of the Evangelists, and bring to view the scene at Golgotha. Let us look upon the Crucified and upon the watchers at his cross.

I. The Crucifixion and its witnesses. The place is not far from the Holy City. Yonder is the temple, with its altar and its sanctuary. The typical sacrifice is yet offered there. God is yet within the vail. What histories are enshrined within that monument! The Tabernacle and the Temple have held the moveable and the fixed centre of God's revealed presence for many a generation. All the world has known or felt of God has been learned and experienced around the sanctuary and the altar. From Zion has gone forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. There, too, has the promise been recorded and the covenant has been perpetuated If the sacred courts have been full of memorials, they have been full of foreshadowings, too, of things to come. The altar, the sacrifice, the robed priest, the sprinkled blood, have long betokened Isaiah's Emmanuel—God with us—the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. There Israel has longed and prayed for Messiah—"the Coming One." But, mystery of mysteries, he has been there. The Lord has suddenly appeared in his temple. In the temple of his body the promised Son of the Highest has long ago appeared, The vail of unbelief has been upon their hearts so dense and heavy that Jews and Jewish priests have failed to see their cherished prophecies fulfilled, their promised deliverer at hand. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. Under the shadow of the Temple they have seized the Lord of the Temple; the hands that offered the sacrifice have been lifted against the antitype of the sacrifice; the voices that prayed for Messiah have cried, "Crucify him! crucify him!" They have dragged him from his followers to Pilate's hall, and from the judgment-seat to this place of a scull. Unwittingly, here have they erected another altar, and prepared the eternal sacrifice. Now the glory is wavering about the shekinah, the vail of the sanctuary is trembling. There stands the pride of the nation, significant and glorious as of old; but wait, the glory is departing: the empty, bereaved walls may stand, but the God of the Covenant will be far from its hallowed precincts; the mercy-seat will pass into the heavens. His cross is reared, but not within the city. Blood must not pollute its sacred dust. Ah! did they but know whose blood it was that bathed the cross and followed the cruel spear, not the dust of Jerusalem, but their dark souls who dragged him thence, might have lain beneath the crimson streams and gathered every precious drop. "His blood

be on us and our children." What agony of prayer, what earnestness of faith, would have transformed that fearful imprecation, had they known that this was indeed the Christ, the Son of God—Messiah of the promise! "The place is nigh unto Jerusalem:" What wonderful words he had spoken there! what blessed miracles of mercy he had wrought in its ungrateful homes! how he had wept over its blindness and infatuation! Nigh unto Jerusalem—it is not far from Olivet, and Kedron, and Gethsemane. What memories must the dying sufferer recall as his languid eye sweeps slowly around this consecrated ground! But these histories are past. The closing scene is now before us. The story is simple. The description, true to nature, and divinely appropriate to the solemn dignity of the great event, bears no coloring of human art. A few grand strokes of simple truthfulness and that is all.

It is the third hour of the day. The sun has made half its way to the meridian The Saviour is nailed to the rude cross. It is not so high and lofty a thing as the painters make it. It was only such a load as could be laid upon the shoulders of a single person, for it was borne hither by one Simon, a Cyrenian. A post, a little higher than a human form, with a transverse piece, and not that elevated timber which gives comparative dignity to the scene in paintings. Nailed to this, as it lay upon the ground, the Saviour was prostrate at the feet of men. Then with a careless lift and a cruel jolt, it was sent home to the rest made for it in the earth. On either hand two malefactors are crucified with him. A companion of sinners, and a sharer of their doom, is the innocent and guiltless Son of Man. "He was numbered with the transgressors." And now the deed is done. The slow approach of death is to be awaited by the unrelenting executioners, and oh! with what anguish by the suspended sufferer. What saith he to the bloody murders, as they retire from their work of assassination. Not one complaining, recriminating word. He might have cursed them with a withering, blighting, scathing, everlasting curse. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." But pleadingly he lifts his eyes to heaven, and prays: "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." But look! what is it we see? A cross? But the malefactors are crucified as well as Jesus. Pierced hands and feet and flowing blood? The thieves are nailed and bleeding, too. What constitutes the mystery of this death? Is it only the strangely truthful inscription above that central cross, "Jesus, the Nazarene, King of the Jews!" Ah! no. It is in the glorious person, and sacrificial character of the Nazarene. He is Son of God, and Son of Man. He dies not his own death, but the death of others, that they may live for ever. But when we see the distorted, writhing frame, and

the blood, the thorn-pierced brow, do we see all? Are these the price of man's redemption? Oh! no. The sacrifice of atonement is offered within the vail. We stand only in the outer court; we see the victim slain and the flowing gore, but within, in the secret sanctuary of the heart, behind the vail of his flesh the offering is made.

It is the suffering spirit of Jesus that bears the penalty of sin. The burden of guilt has forced the strange wild plaint of the garden from his lips: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death." And now again it presses sore, and as the full penalty of sin, the hiding far away of God, comes like an iron into his soul he cries: "My God! My God; why hast thou forsaken me?" There is a mystery in that secret heart that only Jesus and the damned can know.

Such is the scene of death. But it is the sixth hour. What means this coming of midnight at the time of noon? Gloom settles on the hills around and on Jerusalem, and on the pallid faces of the dying, and on the grim-visaged sentinels that guard the place.

II. But while it is gathering deeper and deeper against the ninth sad hour, let us cast around us and see who are the witnesses of this scene. Did we not hear him say: "Father forgive them." Is the husband of Mary, is Joseph here? He never called him father in presence of an unfamiliar ear. For aught we know Joseph was sleeping sweetly in the city of David. He looked up and prayed to God—his Everlasting only Father.

God the Father was a witness of that scene of agony. What feelings thrilled through the heart of God, who, who can tell? This was his well-beloved, only-begotten Son, the sharer of his nature, the only object of his infinite paternal love. He loved the world and gave this Son to die for its perishing sons. Was it no sacrifice. Then was his love no love, then was redemption without cost. We know that God cannot be unhappy, but God can feel. Had he no sympathy with a suffering Son? And is joy the counterpart of agony. I know not what to call it, or how to describe it, but there was something in the heart of God that is not joy. It is blessedness, the God-like bliss of sacrifice of self for others. It was God's price for the restoration to his arms of the guilty and lost. It was the deep disturbance in his holy nature out of which was born the everlasting calm of justice satisfied, the eternal harmony of righteousness and mercy reconciled.

Is the divine Father unattended? Were angels in the city of David, did they hover over Gethsemane until the conflict ended, their ministrations might joyfully be proffered, and are they not here? The song of heaven is hushed, and every harp is cast aside. Who can imagine that gathered throng of celestial spectators?

The manger was a mystery; the temptation, the weary life of thirty years, the judgment-hall and the garden were impenetrable; but this, who of the angels that desire to look into these things can solve it? What thoughts, what feelings, are darkly settling and deeply moving on that celestial company? But as they gaze they see what mortal eyes cannot behold. Black winged spirits float in the lowering darkness. Satan and his fiends are here. He who assaulted Jesus in the wilderness of trial, who left him for a season to gather energy for the conflict in the garden, is here. Now is his hour and the powers of darkness. In that unseen struggle what skill of satanic ingenuity, what force of once angelic power, he plies, no human mind can estimate. It is his only hour, his last. Such are the witnesses from the spirit-world that gather round the cross. The host of heavenly friends, the battalions of infernal foes. Are demons the only enemies at hand? Look down from the air to the hill of Calvary. No! Here are enemies he came to bless, now imprecating upon themselves and on their children the fearful curse of the shedding of innocent blood. They stand quarrelling with Pilate concerning the inscription above the head. "Write not I am the king of the Jews," but "He said, I am the king of the Jews." Pilate, the weak and yielding Roman officer, who washed his hands in water, to dye them deep in the blood of the guiltless, is here to see the work his guilty subservience has wrought. But what passing throng is this? Here are robes of office, faces that speak authority and wisdom, forms of gravity and sanctity. These are the chief priests, with the scribes and elders. Israel officially represented in a mock procession, saying: he saved others, himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he will have him; for he said I am the Son of God." And as the reviling leaders pass, on come the blinded, maddened throng, railing on him and wagging their heads, and saying: "Ah, thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it again in three days, save thyself and come down from the cross."

But hark! the thieves also that are crucified with him cast the same in his teeth. They have leisure from their pains, excruciating as they are, to rail at their suffering, dying companion. But the Holy Spirit too is there. One heart is touched, one enemy becomes a friend. One malefactor rebukes his reviling partner, and expostulates, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." And, looking unto Jesus, he says: "Lord, remember me when thou comest unto thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto you, to-day thou shalt be with me in paradise?" And now his enemies have done all they can. The mercenary soldiers

have parted his garments and cast lots for his vesture; and "sitting down they watch him there."

Are there no friends to witness this dying scene? Have all forsaken him and fled? Is he God-forsaken and man-forsaken, too? Have friendship, love, gratitude, all perished? Has courage yielded to selfish, shameful fear? Where then are the scores whose friends he raised from death, the hundreds that he healed, the thousands that he fed? Are all afar away in this hour of his extremity? Thank God, no, no! For poor humanity's sake, thank heaven, some faithful spirits true to the last are here. Who are they? Whom of all he knew, and loved, and blest: that knew, and loved and cherished him, would you expect to be here? Who would be first to seek him, who would stand nearest to him, who would be last to leave him? Is it Peter who affirmed with solemn oath he would die with him rather than deny him? Is it Lazarus over whose grave he had wept, whom he had called back to life from the dead? Who? What heart can not answer? Oh? how the heart thrills as we open John's sweet history and read: Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother! That simple story is enough, it asks no comment, She who remembered the stall at Bethlehem, could not be absent from Calvary. How this stroke of inspired pencil completes the view. If that dark-browed warrior, the centurian could say, amid the darkness and the quakings of the earth, "Truly this was the Son of God," we who look upon Mary at the cross can say, truly this was the Son of Man. Now, perhaps, she dimly begins to see the meaning of long past prophecies of angels, of many a darkly mysterious word of that strange child. Certain it is, though Peter said concerning his willingness to die, "that be far from thee Lord," she did not, nor did she hear again the mild rebuke "Wist you not, that I must be about my Father's business."

But she is not alone. Sisterly love has furnished a companion; with her is Mary the wife of Cleopas. But there is still another. Much has she loved and much has been forgiven her; and there she stands weeping at the feet now bathed with flowing blood. It is Mary Magdalene. Oh? the courage of love. Self-confidence has failed, boasting rashness has fled away, manly fortitude and daring have faltered and succumbed. But love, unthinking, uncaring, fearless love, has pressed through the throng, and faced the danger, and pushed aside expostulation, crying: "Let us go that we may see him die," and if God wills, die with him. Or do you think that woman dared to go where man could not, because she presumed upon a woman's liberty and man's chivalric forbearance and respect, and this accounts for love's presence at the cross? Ah! wait. Read John's history again. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, woman, behold they son. Then saith he to

the disciple, behold thy mother." Yes. John is here to see the heaving breast on which he had so often leaned. Love, manly love, is stronger too than death.

And now it is the ninth hour. Jesus, knowing that all things were accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, "I thirst." Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When therefore Jesus had received the vinegar, he said it is finished, and crying with a loud voice, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit," "and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost." Closed for ever was the volume of his gospel, and he himself set fast the seal and wrote—this is the end. Complete was all his atoning, redeeming work, and his own voice proclaimed, "It is finished."

The darkness dissipates, nature resumes her wonted course until the day he comes again; the priests go back to the now-deserted temple with the vail of its sanctuary rent in twain; the people disperse, a people no more for ever, to wander a reproach and a by-word in all the earth, until they look again on him they pierced and mourn; John seeks out the terrified disciples and gathers them for prayer; Mary goes home to weep and wait; and the other Marys go their ways until Joseph of Arimathea shall have laid him in his own new tomb, where sitting down over against the sepulchre, they will watch him there.

My hearers, had you been in Jerusalem, while these thrilling scenes were passing, where would you have been found? Start not at the question. It may not be answered so promptly as you think. There is ground for the question; where would you have been numbered in the hour of your Redeemer's agony and shame—you, that outwardly bear a Christian name by courtesy of Christendom, if not by profession of the name of Jesus; you, that despise and hate the very lineaments of a Jewish face because his fathers crucified the Lord, where would you have stood? Would you have joined the railing throng, or skulked with fear away, or, boldly with Peter denied your Saviour? Ask your heart the solemn question.

If you do not hesitate to answer as Peter promptly answered, because you, like him, have not been put on trial of your faith and courage, answer a question akin to the one we have propounded to you, Where are you now? Are you among the followers of Jesus, or among his enemies? Do you openly confess his name, or do you, by every word and deed, by your compromise with the world and Satan, daily deny the Lord? Where are you now? There is a solemn sense in which you may crucify the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame.

If you can bitterly condemn the Roman governor, and execrate the Jewish throng, and reprobate the perfidy of Peter, the fear

and faithlessness of all who forsook the Master and fled, be careful that you seal not your own eternal condemnation. Remember whoso is ashamed of Jesus now, of him will he be ashamed when he comes in his glory.

Come to his side with faith and love; endure the cross with him despising the shame. He will ere long come in a glorious triumph, and if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.

SERMON VIII.

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THE GOSPEL PRODUCING DISTURBANCE.

"THINK not that I am come to send peace upon the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."—MATT. x: 34.

THIS announcement from the lips of one prophesied of as the Prince of Peace, and heralded by that song of the angels, "Glory to God in the Highest, Peace on earth and good will to men," is sufficiently startling to arrest our wakefullest attention—especially so as Christ was not wont to deal in paradoxes or hyperboles, but to speak only words of soberness and truth.

"Think not"—as though he saw they were, or might easily be, mistaken on this point—"think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I am not come to send peace, but a sword." "Dream not, that in becoming my disciples, you have before you a life of ease—a pathway of flowers and fragrance alone; there will be thorns with the roses. 'In me ye shall have peace; but in the world ye shall have tribulation.' The practical results of my teachings will be commotion and strife, and whoever rides to victory with me, shall ride ofttimes in the whirlwind." Not that God loveth war for the sake of war: but that the preaching of the truths which men dislike will arouse their opposition and lead to battle.

The Gospel of Christ meant something; its teacher was in earnest; it had its mission to accomplish, and it was the purpose of Heaven that it should not be a failure. Had it come with honied words to please those who had denounced the government of God, then the conspirators who had engaged in an unholy rebellion

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against the Divine authority, would have made no resistance, and of course, there would have been no disturbance. But it came to dislodge treason—and all sin is nothing else but treason against the government of God—to pronounce the sentence of condemnation against the wrong-doer, and it came with power. While it presented offers of mercy to those who were willing to return to their allegience, it uttered more than the thunders of Sinai against those who persisted in their crimes, and refused to lay down their arms. While in the gentlest tones of compassion and pardon, it said to the penitent, "Go in peace, thy sins be forgiven thee," it came with the seven woes of the Apocalypse for all confirmed and graceless rebels, and poured them out upon their devoted heads in this wise:

"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law; judgment, mercy, and faith.

"Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites For ye are liks unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity!"

Such preaching produced disturbance. It had point to it, it had power in it, it was full of spears, sharper than any two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit; "it was quick"—that is, alive—the word of God always is—and men felt that it had awful meaning. There was war! If the Gospel had come as an opiate to soothe men's consciences and put them to rest—to throw the world into a deeper spiritual sleep than before, then there had been no commotion. But as it fired its guns over the heads of slumbering Jew or Gentile, it said in tones that they heard, "Awake thou that sleepest!" And they couldn't sleep! Whatever else they did, they could not sleep. They might curse, as many of them did, but as well sleep on a Fourth of July morning, with the cannon thundering on the village common, as sleep under such preaching. One must learn to sleep on a bed of nettles, before he could slumber under such pulpit denunciations. The Diet of Worms didn't sleep under Martin Luther, nor the Court of the Bloody Queen under the faithful and scathing de-

nunciations of the fearless Knox. The preaching of Christ produced disturbance. His path was the tract of an earthquake, and hell quaked as well as earth. Men prayed him to depart out of their coasts, and the devils shrieked, "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" making the same mistake that demons incarnate and non-carnate have often made since, in supposing that they were at any time legally exempt from persecution and punishment. Notice has been served once for all upon any evil spirit, and sentence of death has been passed. Execution is postponed only at the discretion and mercy of the Court.

The Apostles, too, having caught the spirit of the great Agitator, went everywhere sowing dragon's teeth, that sprung up armed men. The record of them is unwittingly given by the Jews of Thessalonica: "These men that have turned the world upside down have come hither also; and they all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying there is another King—one Jesus." Thus they had been guilty of preaching that heresy of a higher law, and the world was disturbed—turned upside down—and, as I once heard the worthy Bishop McIlvaine say, "it aught to have been, for it had long enough been wrong side up."

The Gospel has for its errand the radical and thorough reformation of human life, human society, human government, and human institutions generally, until they shall conform perfectly to the Divine model. This you can not have without a melee. These good-natured, easy, and ease-loving souls who can not endure hostility or encounter hardship are ill adapted to the stern work of such a reformation. Pity for them that they could not have had their lot cast in millennial times, when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; and their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Beautiful picture! and painted by the hand of a Master! But its beauty is enhanced four-fold by the dark background of the pre-mellennial ages through which we and our fathers have been compelled to pass. Pioneer life has its hardships—felling the forests, bridging the gulfs, building the highways; and its perils of wild beast, and deadly reptile, and deadlier miasma—hardships and perils encountered in transforming barbarism to civilization. So these are the pioneer ages of the Gospel. Demons are to be encountered in the body and out of the body, worse than the wolf and the malaria. Giant sins are to be attacked and felled, deep gulfs 'twixt earth and heaven are to be bridged, and a highway cast up for the redeemed of the Lord to pass over; "and

it shall be called the way of holiness. No lion shall be there; nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found; there; but the redeemed shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

But before this vision, there come many others of toil and trouble, drum and sword, "confused noise and garments rolled in blood, and battles with burning and fuel of fire." And these must come in order of the other. So Christ came to send a sword, and to bring division as the inevitable forerunner of the glorious time which is to come hereafter. Whoever determines upon any end, adopts by implied necessity the means for accomplishing it. It was in this sense that the Prince of Peace came to send a sword and to bring division. He seeks for peace—true peace, deep-rooted and long-abiding—but he knows that such peace comes only of right, and that in such a world as this right comes only after long and stern moral conflicts. "First pure, then peaceable." And purity ofttimes cometh only of burning out the alloy in the hottest fires. That we be at peace is not one of the absolute requirements—that we be right, is. "As much as lyeth in you live peaceably with all men"—evidently implying, "As much as it does not lie in you to live peaceably with them, fight them!" Purity first, peace afterward. Truth can make no truce with falsehood. Right can never lay down its arms at the bidding of wrong. Justice "never surrenders." How hot the battle shall be, and how long, must depend upon the obduracy of the enemy and the strength of his forces. For the duration and virulence of every contest between the right and the wrong, the wrong is solely responsible. The highwayman whose arrest and punishment cost the lives of twenty men, bears upon his soul the blood-guiltiness of the murder of every one of them. Christ was King of Salem —that is, Peace: but he was Melchisedek—that is, King of Righteousness, first; and he will never wear his crown as King of Salem, until he has come to sway his sceptre of righteousness over all the earth. "Our God is a God of war," whereon, wherever, and as long so ever as there is sin to be warred upon. Every enthroned wrong is to be dethroned; and Satan's empire will not yield without a struggle. When Christ ordered the demon to leave the young man, in the Gospel, he left; but he left his victim to all appearance well-nigh dead. Yet he was not dead. On the contrary, he was now for the first time on the way to full recovery. The devils who were expelled from the raving Gadarene entered into the swine, and they ran violently down into the sea, and were choked. Quite a disturbance followed. The Gadarenes (through some Safety Committee, probably,) at once besought Christ to depart out of their land. That a human being

had been delivered from a long and raving madness was nothing to them, in comparison with a loss of their property! A man had been saved; but that was nothing—their swine were dead, and that was something. When Paul was it Philippi, a demon was expelled from a young woman, quite to the discomfort of her masters, who had speculated out of her sad affliction, and made large gains by the fortune-telling of the poor lunatic. Her redemption was a matter of no congratulation; and Paul and Silas —for the deed of mercy had the usual fee—were beaten with many stripes, cast into the inner prison, and their feet were made fast in the stocks. But with unfettered souls they prayed and sang praises to God; and the prisoners heard them, and Heaven heard them, and a great earthquake came, with a writ of *habeas corpus* for the prisoners, and of *quo warranto* for the jailor. There was a great disturbance. And yet Paul—rash enthusiast that he was, and miserable fanatic, as some would pretend—knew no better than to plunge straightway into another melee of the same sort at Ephesus. The account of it is in the nineteenth chapter of Acts:

"And the same time there arose no small stir about that way: for a certain man, named Demetrius, a silver-smith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen, whom he called together, with the workmen of like occupation and said: Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover, ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying, that they be no gods, which are made with hands: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.

"And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians! And the whole city was filled with confusion, and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another; for the assembly was confused, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with his hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

Here was another disturbance! And Paul was all his life-long getting into just such difficulities. And the Gospel, when faithfully administered, has many a time, in the hands of other preachers of it, produced similair commotions in neighbourhoods, communities, and nations. And it will continue to do so until all the devils, whose name is legion, are dislodged and driven into the Lake of Genesaret, or some other.

When the Duke of Albermarle was expostulated with on the danger to which he exposed himself at the Battle of Chatham, and was entreated to retire, he replied, very coolly: Sir, if I had been afraid of bullets, I should have quitted this trade of a soldier long ago." The Reformer who is frightened at the sound of battle, had better adopt some other profession. A physician who administers a cathartic or emetic must understand his therapeutics and pharmacy well enough not to expect the same sort of sedative influence as follows a potion of morphine. An artillery-man must know that when he touches off a 200 pounder, there will be a noise, and somebody may be hurt when the shell bursts. If he is not prepared for such unpleasant results, he had better not enlist; and especially if he be an officer of such a company and can not bear to fire a gun, lest he should irritate the enemy, he had better throw up his commission. The Church of Christ is such an artillery company—the gospel is a brass piece of the largest caliber and longest range, and its locker is full of shot and shell for every wrong on earth; and every minister is an officer in such a company; and the soldier of Christ who does not understand what the church millitant means, and who supposes that he is never to use any but "Quaker guns" in storming the forts of his Satanic Excellency (who is at the head of all the confederate forces engaged in this secession from God's govenrment) ought to study better his tactics and his orders, and accustom himself to the smell of powder, the explosion of shells, and the stern realities of bloody fight. Ministers especially, whose business it is to administer the gospel, must understand that there are tonics and purgatives and irritants in its *Materia Medica* as well as sedatives and anodynes.

Crabbe has left us this picture of the Vicar:

"To what famed College we our Vicar owe,
To what fair country let historians show;
Few now remember when the mild young man,
Ruddy and fair his Sunday task began;
Few live to speak of that soft-soothing look
He cast around as he prepared his book;
It was a kind of supplicating smile,
But nothing hopeless of applause the while;
And when he finished, his corrected pride
Felt the desert, and yet the praise denied.
Thus he his race began, and to the end
His constant care was no man to offend;

No haughty virtues stirred his peaceful mind;
Nor urged the priest to leave the flock behind;
He was his Master's soldier, but not one
To lead an army of his martyrs on:
Fear was his ruling passion."

If this be praise, we covet blame. It was probably intended for irony; but if not it is only the keener irony for not being intended.

The Gospel is in its nature aggressive—systematically and powerfully aggressive upon all evil. It is not to fall in with established opinions, and organized wrongs, but to assail and correct them. It is not to stand simply upon the defensive. It is positive in its character, and revolutionary in its aims. The world is wrong, and it is to be made right; and Christianity has undertaken the work. Sins, established or unestablished, organic or inorganic, individual or social, have no rights that anybody "is bound to respect." All evils are usurpers, holding only by a robber's right. It is the purpose of the Gospel to dislodge them, and to enthrone the lawful king, whose right only it is to reign.

The religion of Christ is to prevail over all false religions—all infidelity, all immorality, all impiety, and all inhumanity. And these will not yeild without a desperate struggle. It is not therefore to stand with cowed aspect, as though it asked pardon of men for being in the world; but to assert its claims and assume its rightful authority. Dubius, in Cowper, is no ideal of ours; you may remember him:

"Dubius is such a scrupulous good man—
Yes—you may catch him tripping if you can.
He would not with a peremptory tone,
Assert the nose upon his face his own;
With hesitation admirably slow
He humbly hopes—presumes—it may be so.
His evidence, if he were called by law,
To swear to some enormity he saw,
For want of prominence and just relief,
Would hang an honest man, and save a thief.
Though constant dread of giving truth offence,
He ties up all his hearers in suspense;
Knows what he knows as if he knew it not;
What he remembers seems to have forgot;
His sole opinion, whatsoe'r befall,
Centreing at last in having none at all."

Our Gospel is no Dubius! It is, on the contrary, most decidedly positive in its principles and peremptory in its teachings. Its unequivocal injunction is: "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil!" Those who stand as its advocates and representatives must be expected, therefore, to have a force of character that shall awaken, sometimes, stern opposition. "Wo unto you when all men shall speak well of you!" You have read, perhaps, of one, who, when

praised by some unscrupulous knave, started up, exclaiming: "What wickedness have I done, that this fellow praises me?" The encomiums of some men are very equivocal compliments. Their maledictions are to be chosen rather that their benedictions. A quaint old minister said, some years ago in my hearing, that he always expected to find the noblest men and the most earnest workers maligned and belied; just as he had always noticed that the fruit trees that were the fullest of clubs, were those that bore the best fruit. Good comfort to the persecuted for righteousness sake. Men may be persecuted for other sake than that. Marauders and pirates are sometimes hunted as well as prophets and martyrs. A man is not to take it for granted that the persecution which he suffers is conclusive evidence of his heroic virtue and his self-sacrificing devotion. But, on the other hand, it is certainly not to be assumed that a martyr is simply the victim of his own fanaticism, or folly, or head strong rashness, or self-willed obstinacy. It may be the result of his incorruptible integrity, and his answerving fidelity of the truth. "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution," is probably not yet an obsolete saying; it may continue in force until the millennium is fully come, which certainly is not yet.

All reformatory movements have been attended by agitation. They must be of course. They could not be reformatory without. And the greater the reformation, the greater the commotion. Revolutions can only come by war—in fact or in figure—and whoever has not the courage to meet the revolutionary war must abide a Tory. Before Luther, was Erasmus—learned and acute; but a coward. He didn't care to ride on the whirlwind. He knew the truth, but lacked the courage to avow it. He preferred to abide in peace. And so the reformation tarried until the storm-god—Martin of Erfurth—appeared. He was willing to ride with the Almighty, making the clouds his chariot, and the winds his messengers. "Were there as many devils at Worms as there are tiles on the roofs of their houses, I'd go!" reveals the man, and shows us the hiding of his power. He dared and did. There were mighty thunderings and earthquakes in divers places. But he knew that when the earthquakes should cease, there would be a deeper and truer quiet—and more lasting.

Thunder-storms come often, and many there are that tremble as peal follows peal, and flash succeeds flash in the darkened skies, but we have learned that this is God's way of purifying the air, that man may breathe easier, and burning up the malaria that they may breathe larger. Storms at sea are sometimes unwelcome to the timid-mariner; but without them the clear blue sea, exhaling its life-giving vapors to water and beautify the earth, would become a great mass of pestilence and death to every thing that hath breath by land and by sea. So God causeth the waves to

clap their hands in praise of him who sendeth the winds to stir them up.

Members of the Senior Class: In going forth to the more public and practical duties of life, we trust it is that you may make the world the better for your having lived in it. But, let me say to you, you will not find it stretching its hands imploringly and beseeching you to reform it. It is not anxiously waiting for you or anybody else to come around and heal it of its diseases, and receive its liberal and cheerfully-rendered fee for your medical advice and your proffered aid. Its devils will shriek when you attempt to cast them out; and your compensation for honest efforts to make the world better will often be no other than that of the Great reformer. Remember the words which he has said unto you: "The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me they will also persecute you." That is the fee for your best services.

He who goes forth into such a world as this, and moves among men without stirring up somebody, may write his life down a failure. His commander-in-chief has sent him into a rebellous province, and if he didn't at least now and then meet with some collision, as he encounters the enemies of his king, it is because he is chargeable with compounding of felony, or misprison of treason. It is war to which he is called—war upon wrong everywhere. His life is the life of a soldier intent upon quelling an insurrection and recovering the rebels to their allegiance. It will be no downy bed of ease on which such an one will be carried to the skies.

Moral courage is needed for moral conflicts. An American soldier at the siege of Quebec, being placed in a position of some danger, requested his officer to change his situation. Being asked his reason, he replied with felicitous serio-comic style, "that he didn't know how it was, but somehow he didn't feel himself bold enough to stay there!" There are many such positions in the great campaign. The reformer who lacks courage for the hour of battle, has mistaken his calling.

And what is a man's life worth unless he is in the true sense a reformer, working to make man nobler, truer, diviner, by virtue of his worthy living? He who merely elbows his way along through the world with no other ambition than to get safely through it and out of it, has missed the road to true glory and honor and immortality. The warrior has always been the world's hero. He always will. It is not in human nature to withhold its homage from the truly brave. But as ideas advance, the courage that dares defend the right against all assailants will be crowned with honor above all other courage; and the Christian warrior will be the acknowledged hero of heroes.

With two words to each one of you, as you go forth into a wider life, I close this, our last sermon. Let the first be the counsel of

the great lawgiver of Israel to his successor, Joshua, and they are the words of a hundred and twenty years of wisdom and experience: "Be strong, and of a good courage. Fear not; for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee. He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, therefore, be not dismayed." The second shall be like unto it—the dying charge of the great king to Solomon: "Be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself."

SERMON IX.

A SHORT DISCOURSE.

LIGHT A REPROVER OF EVIL DEEDS.

"For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."—JOHN iii. 20.

The more accurately we are able to judge of men's motives, the more fully do we see the correspondence which exists between human conduct and human character. A man's outward conduct developes his creed. The fool hath said in his heart there is no God;" and the unbelieving mind finds daily opportunity to show forth its infidelity. Men whose hearts are alienated from God, have a natural aversion to his truth, as soon as the light of it penetrates the soul. As some wild beasts roam only in the hours of darkness, while by day they are hidden in their lair, so the carnal mind dreads the light, neither cometh to it, lest its deeds should be reproved.

Why does the evil doer thus hate the light?

1. I answer negatively, that it is not because error is more intelligible then truth. The entrance of God's word giveth light. Truth seeks no concealment, admits of no obscurity; while falsehood lives and thrives only in darkness.

2. Nor is it because error is more easily defended than truth. An attorney once said that a man can be eloquent in defending the truth with half the powers which are requisite in order to be eloquent in defence of falsehood

3. Nor is it because conscience is better pleased with error than

with truth. Falsehood is offensive to an honest conscience, nor can it cease to be so, except after protracted abuse.

4. Nor is it because error makes a better character than truth. The whole world are witnesses here, that the more conversant we are with truth, and the more cordially we embrace it, the more do our characters commend themselves to mankind.

5. Nor is it because error makes men happier. Falsehood must inevitably be detected. It is a precarious basis for happiness. Truth only proves an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast.

6. Nor does error suit the necessities of the ruined sinner better than truth. Once open the eyes of men to see themselves as they are, and they find nothing to meet their case but divine truth.

I answer positively—

1. Wicked men hate the light because it exposes their vileness. When the cellar that has been shut up for years is first laid open, by the opening of windows and doors, it presents a disgusting sight. We wonder how so much filth could have accumulated there. So the dark and wicked heart of man seems unutterably vile and loathsome when God's word and Spirit enter and illuminate it.

2. Wicked men hate the light, because it exposes their danger. Sin and its consequences are palpably connected. It is a fever in the soul which of itself is painful. Its presence insures the certainty of misery. It is a leprosy which must eat up the soul and subject it to an eternal death.

3. Wicked men hate the light, because it shows the necessity of a better character. The soul in love with sin is agonized with an apprehension of the necessity of reformation. Sinful habits let go their hold with wonderful reluctance. They cry out, "Let us alone." And when they are expelled, they are like those howling demons, who were driven out by our Saviour. The contrast which exists between good and bad men, is painful to the wicked just in proportion as it is perceived.

4. Wicked men hate the light, because it awakens the fear that they will be overcome. They are always found in an attitude of defiance. They cherish the most determined hostility to God, and treat him as a foe. The entrance of light shows God's superiority in goodness and power, while it exhibits the certainty of their ultimate defeat.

REMARKS.

1. God ranks all who hate and resist the light among evil doers. Multitudes pride themselves upon their rectitude of conduct, who yet are, in the sight of God, exceedingly wicked. We see men abusing the law of God which is holy, just and good. We see them abusing the person of God by their neglect of his commands and the disregard of all his wishes. We see them abusing their

own consciences; we see them abusing themselves and their fellow-men by a course of conduct which tends to produce misery here and hereafter. We see them cherishing a spirit which would mar the concord of heaven, and break up the heavenly choirs, and yet glorying in their native excellence, and rejoicing that they are not as other men. Yet so long as they resist the light, they must be regarded as evil doers, and be punished as such.

2. As men grow in wickedness, we may expect to see them growing in hatred of the truth. This may account for the fact that so many discontinue the use of the means of grace.

3. This subject explains the reason that faithful ministers must expect persecution. If they make men see their sins, they incur odium. The man who loves sin, and will not abandon it, will hate the occasion of its constant presentation.

4. We see the cause of the torments of the convicted sinner, and of the horrors of the dying bed; and also why there will be such amazing wrath at the opening of the latter day glory. The pouring of truth in all its pungency and power upon the long-abused conscience, is like the sunbeam admitted upon the animalculæ who writhe and twist and then expire.

5. We see one of the ingredients of eternal woe. Every lost sinner will spend his eternity in a blaze of light which will fully exhibit his enormity of guilt. There can be no escape from that light which was hated and shunned through a life time. Conviction will be thorough, and ever increasing in the bosom of the lost, and this will constitute the worm that never dies.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

Not always are the dying scenes of God's children witnessed by earthly friends. But doubtless ministering angels wait around and form the convoy of the departing souls in their upward flight to heaven. Recently in the Fulton-street Prayer-meeting, a gentleman arose who was evidently an officer in the army, and quoted from the words of Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." He said that after a late skirmish, or battle, on coming out the roll of his company was called, and he found that two men were missing to whom he was very much attached as Christians. They were pious, godly men. Their voices were always heard in their little company prayer-meetings. They

were always the right men in the right place.

He knew not what had become of them, whether wounded, taken prisoners, or killed. He was determined to know, and though the matter was full of danger, he made up his mind he would look for these men in the face of the enemy and over ground which the enemy commanded. The enterprise was so hazardous that he would not ask any one to go for him, or with him. So he ran over that ground alone and turned up the faces of those who had fallen, and there he found all that remained, this side of heaven, of his two praying friends. They had been killed outright, and their faces looked beautifully calm and peaceful, as if their last thoughts had been of the blissful home to which they had been so suddenly summoned. I ran back, said the speaker, thinking all the way, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let *my* last end be like his.

For the Prayer-Meeting.

THE SOLDIER'S PRAYER.

It was the evening after a great battle. All day long the din of strife had echoed far, and thickly strewn lay the shattered forms of those so lately erect and exultant in the flush and strength of manhood. Among the many who bowed to the conqueror Death that night, was a youth in the first freshness of mature life. The strong limbs lay listless, and the dark hair, was matted with gore on the pale, broad forehead. His eyes were closed. As one who ministered to the sufferer bent over him, he at first thought him dead; but the white lips moved, and slowly, in weak tones, he repeated,

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take;
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

As he finished he opened his eyes, and meeting the pitying gaze of a brother soldier, he exclaimed, "My mother taught me that when I was a little boy, and I have said it every night since I can remember. Before the morning dawns I believe God will take my soul for 'Jesus' sake;' but before I die I want to send a message to my mother.

He was carried to a temporary hospital, and a letter was written to his mother, which he dictated, full of Christian faith and filial love. He was calm and peaceful. Just as the sun arose his spirit went home, his last articulate words being,

"I pray the Lord my soul to take;
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

So died William B——, of the Massachusetts volunteers. The prayer of childhood was the prayer of manhood

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For the Prayer-Meeting.

THE EFFECT OF PRAYER.

Most persons find no difficulty in believing that prayer exerts a happy and desirable influence on the worshipper himself; but even this can hardly be, if it is generally unterstood that this is *all*. Indeed, I can not help thinking that conscience itself would dissuade many from resorting to prayer, if brought to look on it as no better than a kind of well-meant cheat which we practice on ourselves for its moral uses. Prayer, to have much effect on ourselves, must be believed to have an effect on God. It is too solemn a transaction by far to be made use of as a kind of

spiritual strategy. No; make not our prayers to seem one thing and be another. Strike not our devotions dead by the sceptical sophism that they can only have an effect *on ourselves.* They will have an effect *on God;* for He has said that they will, and the promise has been ratified and confirmed in the experience of holy and devout men of all ages. They will have an effect on God, for He who is "In the bosom of the Father" has said that they will. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." Again it is said: "Let us come boldly into the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." And more affectingly still in the words of the text: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him." Wherefore, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ."

For the Prayer-Meeting.

QUESTIONS TO THOSE WHO NEGLECT PRAYER-MEETINGS.

1. Are you always better employed? If not, can it be right in you to absent yourself?

2. Do you get more good to your own soul, and do more good to others, by staying away? If not, can you be acting wisely?

3. Does your own conscience justify you, or have you not some- [redacted] a difficulty in keeping it [redacted] on the subject?

Will a death-bed commend your present course, or will you then look upon your neglect of prayer-meetings with pleasure, think you?

5. Does not your pastor suffer by your neglect? Does it not hurt his feelings, cool his zeal, and hinder his usefulness?

6. Are not your fellow-members in the church discouraged by you, and may you not thus offend Christ's little ones?

7. Is not your own family injured by your neglect? What will your children think of prayer-meetings, seeing you habitually neglect them? Is it surprising if they despise them?

8. Is there no reason to fear that unconverted sinners may be both hindered and led to think lightly of prayer by your conduct.

9. Can you have a proper concern for the prosperity of the Church, the spread of Christ's cause, and the conversion of sinners if you never meet to pray for them?

10. Are you sure that you fulfil your duty as a church-member while you neglect prayer meetings? Is neglect of duty no sin, and is there no probability of you being called to account for it?

11. Did any one ever really gain anything, either in temporal or spiritual things, by neglecting prayer-meetings? If you think so, can you prove it?

12. Is there no selfishness, or pride, or worldly-mindedness at the root of your neglect? If so, ought such things to be encouraged?

13. Would it be right to give up the prayer-meetings? Do you think this would please God, or improve the cause? But if all the members did as you do, must they not be given up? Could not the rest find excuses for staying away,

think you, as well as you? Do you not think they would if their hearts were as worldly, or as cold, or as indifferent about the prosperity of the cause as you appear to be?

LIFE IN EARNEST.

It is the eternal lifetime that makes the lifetime of the earth such a solemn thing. Sever the living here from the living hereafter, and man's longest being on earth is little more in importance than the flutter of a leaf, his death but the falling of a blossom. But fasten on the infinite and the eternal to our present existence and every thing in life becomes mighty, momentous, solemn. The pang that shoots through our frame and makes each fibre quiver is such as even a weak woman might endure—were it but for a moment—were it to die with us and be buried in the same tomb—were there no capacity of eternal anguish in our nature, or no eternity in which that capacity might develope itself the sting of a moment is a trifle, but the eternal stinging of the undying worm is terrific beyond all utterance. In like manner the thrill of fresh joy which makes the whole man throb with delight, would be scarce worth the having or the losing, were it only like the lightning, flashing intensely bright, and then quenched forever. But a nature gifted with faculties for infinite enjoyment, and with a whole eternity wherein these joyous buds shall expand themselves in undecaying beauty and fragrance, turns our whole life into a deep and awful reality. A flower that folds its leaves, and withers down at sunset may be carelessly trodden under foot; but a star that shall roll round forever in its orbit—either effulgent in its brightness or dark in the gloom of its own choice is an object of wonder and awe.

Such is the life of man—not of one man, or of some men, but every man. By itself it may seem a plaything; in connection with the everlasting future it becomes awfully real and solemn in its aspect. We may be poor, unlettered, obscure, hard-toiling men, still our life is an infinite reality; no mere shadow or vision, but an inconceivable reality in all its parts, great or small.

We must then live in earnest. No other kind of life deserves the name. Life is not life if it be not in earnest. Anything short of this is gross inconsistency—an utter mockery of life. In truth there can be no rational medium between flat infidelity and the most glowing fervour. If there be anything in real life, or anything real in eternity we must be in earnest. If our souls have any value beyond the trees of the forest, we must be in earnest. If heaven be no fable and hell no dream, we must be in earnest. If God so loved the world as to give his Son for us, we must be in earnest. If Jesus died and rose again, and lives in heaven for us, we must be in earnest. "Whatsoever our hand findeth to do, let us do it with our might."

Gedenke zu leben—think of living, is one of Goethe's thoughtful aphorisms. And Carlyle's commentary upon it is worthy of himself. "Thy life, wert thou the pitifulest of all the sons of earth, is no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is thy own. It is all thou hast to confront eternity with. Work, then, like a star, unhasting, yet unresisting."

For the Prayer-Meeting.

ACTIVITY IN HEAVEN.

Because heaven is a place of rest it does not follow that it is a place of idle inactivity. Like the Sabbath, which is its type, it will be a state of such rest as is *consistent with active worship*. The activity of heaven will be tireless and untiring. The highest mental and spiritual exercises of those who are admitted there will not tire; there will be neither flesh nor blood for them to tire; and emancipated from these the soul in heaven, like the soul on earth, could it be thus set free, will exercise its highest powers, untiring and untired. Nor is this all. Heaven is a state of active beneficence. There all are employed in doing good. They who tasted beneficence as a luxury on earth shall banquet on it in heaven for ever. All shall do good; from the highest seraph that bends before the throne, to the last soul saved as by fire. No sooner do saved spirits breathe the atmosphere of heaven than they fly off on errands of love, "ministering angels" to all who need their ministering offices. How sublimely did Dr. Beecher discourse on this theme to his pupils. Hear him:

"Excepting freedom from sin, intense vigorous, untiring action is the minds highest pleasure. I would not wish to go to heaven did I believe that its inhabitants were to sit inactive by purling streams, to be fanned into indolent slumbers by balmy breezes! Heaven, to be a place of happiness, must be a place of activity. Has the far-reaching mind of Newton rested from his profound investigations? Have David and Isaiah hung up their harps, useless as the dusty arms in Westminster Abbey? Has Paul, glowing with godlike enthusiasm, ceased itinerating the universe of God? Are Peter, and Cyprian, and Luther, and Edwards idling away eternity in mere psalm singing? Heaven *is* a place of activity, of never-tiring thought. David and Isaiah will sweep noble and lofty strains in eternity, and the minds of saints, unclogged by cumbersome clay, forever feast on a banquet of thought—rich, glorious thought. Young gentlemen, press on—you will never get through. An eternity of untiring activity is before you, and the universe of thought your field."

THE LITTLE PREACHER.

The following touching incident was related a few days since in the Fulton-street Prayer-meeting as one of the fruits of a revival in Fall River:

"A little boy was converted who was only ten years old. He was a bright, intelligent little boy. His father and mother were utterly regardless on the subject of religion. They had not attended any place of worship for years. Immediately after little Willie's conversion he became exceedingly anxious about the salvation of his father and mother. When his father came in he would run and spring into his lap, and putting his arms around his neck he would say, 'I want you to come to church with me. I want you to be a Christian. I want you to go to heaven with me. I want you to begin to love Jesus right off.' And so when the father entered his own door he would be sure to meet Willie pressing him to come to Jesus and to come to church. At first the father made every effort to divert the mind of the boy and turn the subject. But it was of no use. The boy was continually preaching and persuading.

"At last the father said one evening, 'Wife, I think we had better go to church, if for nothing else to satisfy Willie. I cannot stand his importunity any longer.' So that night they both went with their little son to the prayer-meeting. Strange was the sight to see those two in the prayer-meeting! Never had they been so seen before. The meeting had only well begun when the father on his own notion, went forward to the altar, and when he had reached it, he turned around and addressed his friends and neighbors, saying: 'Friends, if you think Jesus can have mercy on such a sinner as I am, I want you to pray for me. His face betrayed deep distress. Instantly the little boy was on his feet and running around through the crowd looking for his mother; and when he had found her, he took her by the hand and begged her to come and kneel beside his father. With some reluctance she went and knelt, and the son knelt between his parents. The minister within the altar called on some one to pray. He attempted it and broke down. Then the minister tried, and he failed. Then the whole congregation were melted into tears before the Lord. The result was that in a short time the father, and soon afterwards the mother, were converted. The father said he had heard some of the best preachers of New-York, but he had never heard any preaching so touching and powerful as the preaching of his little Willie—'Come to Jesus, father! come to Jesus!'"

PRECIOUS DIAMONDS.

Among the most costly and admired of earth's jewels are diamonds of the purest water. These are sought after with intense desire by the rich and the great in all lands. They attract the eye of every beholder. They never tarnish or decay. Diamonds are little sparkling gems found in the dry beds of streams in South America, and perhaps in other places. They are wrought with immense labor and carefulness by skilful artists, and then sold to deck the crowns of kings, etc., often for thousands of dollars.

In the world of mankind we find that which is analogous to this, though far more interesting and valuable. A human being is a precious diamond. Its sparkling eyes tell of a precious soul back somewhere. It is worth more than the whole world. But it must be wrought by moral artists with much care, and withal by the aid of Christ himself. And finally, it will deck his royal diadem in the day when he makes up his jewels.

Christian reader, you may find those diamonds all around you. Will you help work them so that they may sparkle in the crown of Christ? And ye impenitent, will you consent to be moulded and curiously wrought to become Christ's precious jewels?

GLAD TIDINGS.

A rich Hindoo asked his priest what he must do to find rest and peace of mind. "You must wash yourself" said the priest. "In the sacred river" (Ganges.) He did so, but without relief; the curse of sin weighed his soul to the very ground. A pilgrimage was then imposed on him to an idol temple. He went a hundred and fifty hours through burning sands, but felt as much oppressed by the curse as before. He once more sought counsel of his priest. He [illegible] "You shall be helped." Th[illegible]

doo promised every thing. He was then charged to drive sharp nails through the soles of his shoes, to take a heavy block on his shoulder and in this manner to walk for fifty hours. He undertakes the severe penance. Already he has gone twenty hours amid the most dreadful pains; when he reaches a village where he observes a large congregation listening to a foreigner preach. He was a missionary, who was saying to his heathen brethren, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!" and declaring to them that the Saviour would give peace to all who believed in him. The burdened man drank in the message as if it had been honey. He cast the block from his shoulders, drew his thorny souls from his feet, and called out in the midst of all the people: "He is the one that can help me; He it is that I am seeking. In him I will believe, and him will I follow."

TIME'S SOLILOQUY.

OLD! call you me? Ah! when the Almighty spoke creation into birth I was there. Then was I born. 'Mid the bloom and verdure of paradise I gazed upon the young world radiant with celestial smiles. I rose upon the pinions of the first morn, and caught the sweet dew drops as they fell and sparkled on the boughs of the garden. Ere the foot of man was heard sounding in this wilderness I gazed out on its thousand rivers, flashing in light, and reflecting the broad sun, like a thousand jewels upon their bosoms. The cataracts sent up their anthems in these solitudes, and none was here to listen to the new-born melody but I! The fawns bounded over the hills, and drank at the limpid streams, ages before an arm was raised to injure or make them afraid. For thousands of years the morning star rose in beauty upon these unpeopled shores, and its twin-sister of the eve flamed in the forehead of the sky, with no eye to admire their rays but mine. Ah! call me old! Babylon and Assyria, Palmyra and Thebes rose, flourished, and fell, and I beheld them in their glory and their decline. Scarce a melancholy ruin marks the place of their existence; but when their first stones were laid in the earth I was there! 'Mid all their splendor, glory, and wickedness I was in their busy streets, and crumbling their magnificent palaces to the earth. My books will show a long and fearful account against them. I control the fate of empires; I give them their period of glory and splendor; but at their birth I conceal in them the seeds of death and decay. They must go down and be humbled in the dust—their heads bowed down before the rising glories of young nations, to whose prosperity there will also come a date and a day of decline. I poise my wings over the earth, and watch the course and doings of its inhabitants. I call up the violets upon the hill, and crumble the gray ruins to the ground. I am the agent of a Higher Power, to give life and take it away. I spread silken tresses upon the brow of the young, and plant gray hairs on the head of the aged man. Dimples and smiles, at my bidding, lurk around the lips of the innocent child, and I furrow the brow of the aged with wrinkles. Old! call you me! ay, but when will my days be numbered? When will time end and eternity begin? When will the earth and its waters—and the universe be rolled, and a new world commence its revolutions? Not

till He who first bid me begin my flight so orders it. When his purposes, who called me into being are accomplished, then, and not till then—and no one can proclaim the hour—I too shall go to the place of all living.

THE YEARS.

THE years roll on, the years roll on;
The shadows now stretch o'er the lawn
Whereon the sunlight fell at morn—
The morn of mortal life;
And dusky hours to me have come,
Life's landscape now looks drear and dumb,
And quenched the light, and ceased the hum,
With which my way was rife.

I now look backward on the path
Whereon I've walked 'mid wrong and wrath;
I look and see how much it hath
Of bitterness to tell;
But life's hard lesson must be learned;
By goading care is wisdom earned—
Then upward let the eye be turned,
And all life's scenes are well!

On roll the years, the swift, still years;
And as they pass, how feeling sears—
How drieth up the fount of tears—
Emotion's fires grow dim;
This pulse of life not long can last,
And as the years go hurrying past,
The blooms of life are earthward cast,
And withered heart and limb.

The years, the years sublimely roll,
Unfurling like a lettered scroll!
Look on, and garner in thy soul
The treasures of their lore;
It is God's writing there we see!
Oh! read with deep intensity!
Its truth shall with thy spirit be
When years shall roll no more.

THE CHILD AND THE QUEEN.

How strikingly true it is from the following incident that out of the mouth of babes is ordained praise:

Befurchte (gardener to Elizabeth, consort of Frederick II.) had one little daughter, with whose religious instruction he had taken great pains. When this child was five years of age, the Queen saw her one day while visiting the Royal gardens at Shonhausen, and was so much pleased with her that, a week afterward, she expressed a wish to see the little girl again, The father accordingly brought his artless child to the palace, and a page conducted her into the Royal presence. She approached the Queen with untaught courtesy, kissed her robe, and modestly took the seat which had been placed for her by the Queen's order, near her own person. From this position she could overlook the table at which the Queen was dining with the ladies of her Court, and they watched with interest to see the effect of so much splendour on the simple child. She looked carelessly on the costly dresses of the guests, the gold and porcelain on the table, and the pomp with which all was conducted; and then folding her hands, she sung with a clear, childish voice, these words:

"Jesus! thy blood and righteousness,
Are all my ornament and dress;
Fearless, with these pure garments on,
I'll view the splendours of thy throne!"

All the assembly were struck with surprise, at seeing so much feeling, penetration, and piety in one so young. Tears filled the eyes of the ladies, and the Queen exclaimed, "Ah, happy child! how far are we below you!"

THE CHURCH ADVANCING.—A ship, in order to reach its destined port, may be under the necessity of crossing a wide and rapid ocean-current, by which it shall be carried backward many leagues. But when it has crossed this current, though further from its port than when it entered, it is still nearer

to it in a most important sense. It has overcome an obstacle that must needs have been surmounted. It has not been, upon the whole, going backward, but advancing, and its prospects for the future are now brighter than ever before.

So the Church of God, in her progress toward universal extension, has been swept back by many counter-currents, and has at times seemed to be further from her haven than at the beginning. But God has ever stood at her helm, and has steered her in the best way toward the fulfilment of the glorious promises which he has given her. She has not been, in the great scale of success, going backward, but always forward.

RULES FOR HOME EDUCATION.

1. From your children's earliest infancy, inculcate the necessity of instant obedience.

2. Unite firmness with gentleness. Let your children always understand that you *mean* exactly what you *say*.

3. Never promise them any thing unless you are quite sure you can give them what you promise.

4. If you tell a little child to do something, show him how to do it and see that it is done.

5. Always punish your children for wilfully disobeying you, but never punish them in anger.

6. Never let them perceive that they can vex you or make you lose your self-command.

7. If they give way to petulance and temper, wait till they are calm and then gently reason with them on the impropriety of their conduct.

8. Remember that a little *present* punishment when the occasion arises, is much more effectual than the threatening of greater punishment, should the fault be renewed.

9. Never give your children any thing because they cry for it.

10. On no account allow them to do at one time what you have forbidden, under the like circumstances, at another.

11. Teach them that the only sure and easy way to *appear* good is to be good.

12. Accustom them to make their little recitals with perfect truth.

13. Never allow of tale-bearing.

THE LITTLE ENQUIRING GIRL

It must be a pleasing sight to angels as well as to men to see little girls coming to give their young hearts to Jesus, the Saviour of their souls. The minds of children though naturally prone to sin, are still tender, and like the wax, ready to receive the stamp of heaven on their hearts when impressed by the Holy Spirit. We cannot doubt that many serious impressions on the minds of children are lost, which with proper care on the part of parents and teachers might result in their conversion to God. The following may serve as an encouragement.

"In time of a revival, when the Holy Spirit descended with uncommon power, a little girl, at the close of the service, pressing through the anxious multitude, and coming to the place where the minister stood, said, with a look and tone of voice bespeaking the deep anxiety of her heart, 'I have been seeking religion for some days, and can not find it. Will you tell me what I must do to be saved?' He was struck with her solemn address and apparent sincerity, and directed her to cast her burdened, guilty soul into the arms of her gracious

Saviour, and choose God as her Father, and with a broken heart love and obey him without delay. She retired, and shortly after as she hoped, gave up her heart joyfully to God and chose him as her unfailing portion. She held on her way, and united with the visible Church. Some months after she was siezed with a rapid consumption and died; but her end was peace. Her great work was done: a sweet serenity sat upon her countenance. Death had lost its sting and the grave its dreariness. Leaning upon the arm of her beloved, with the rod and staff to comfort her, she fell asleep in Jesus, and ascended, as we trust, to her rest and home in the skies. Now, had that child refused that favored moment to make God her refuge she might have gone down to the grave unpardoned, and sunk to a world of endless sorrow."

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

An important question: What have we done? We have breathed, moved, and lived on the fruits of the earth. Have we made others better or happier? have we accomplished any good for mankind? have we been the instruments of suppressing vice and immorality, and promoting virtue and industry? If not, it is high time for us to inquire, What have we done? Certain it is, if we live on in the same dull round no one will ever point at us as the instruments of good, and we shall pass off the stage of life, leaving the world in a worse condition than we found it. If there is a life that we look upon with a kind of horror, it is such as those characters lead who never cast a thought to the future, nor care what is the influence they exert, provided they enjoy the present moment and pass away quickly the time that would otherwise hang heavily upon their hands. A laudable ambition we are bound to encourage—an ambition that will prompt to holy deeds and generous impulses—that will lead the possessor, step by step, in the path of usefulness. Let all our young men be thus ambitious, and whenever they shall feel like asking themselves, "What have I done?" they could point to much that would give them pleasant reflections and make them at last resigned whenever the summons came for them to prepare for the grave.

A FEW POINTED QUESTIONS.

Do you remember daily that you and all in your hands and under your charge, belong to God?

Do you remember that there is given unto you these talants to be used for their owner, who will require interest?

Have you not been laying up the Lord's money and substance for your children and heirs, and saying you could not afford to help the Lord's cause when it has been even in great straits?

Where does the Lord say lay up treasures on earth, or make secure your money, and houses, and stocks and merchandise here? The stock of all earthly banks and all securities will be of little value to you when you come to die?

What will you say of all these when He calls upon you to give an account of your stewardship?

Will it not be a dreadful matter for you to die with the Lord's money and substance, which he trusted with you to do his will, secured carefully, and kept in your own hands, for your own use, and kept by you from him?

Man, thou art born for immor-

tality. Thy soul is to live when this world is burned up. The day when thy body shall die is at hand. What art thou doing for that day, and for the eternal being of thy soul? Every day sends its solemn call into thy ears, and every dying man from his grave lifts up the solemn warning. And a voice within thee cries, What art thou doing?

Lost souls now in hell would give riches and honor, with every thing the world affords, for but an opportunity to escape from the damnation of hell. But you, alas! with eternity upon you, with a soul unconverted, unsanctified, without any hope of heaven are letting those precious moments pass, in which you might secure eternal life, and by your neglect are running the fearful risk of being lost for ever.

A man seeking riches, and neglecting his soul's salvation, is like a man in the dark on the brink of an awful precipice, endeavouring to catch a fire-fly, who on securing it, falls headlong, and is dashed to pieces.

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT.

QUENCH not the Spirit! Beware, lest, grieving the Spirit, he cease to move upon your heart, and you become hardened. And oh! think what it is to be hardened! It is to have all the moral and religious sensibilities of the soul deadened. It is to become reckless and unconcerned. It is to be habitually in such a frame of mind that there are no compunctions for the past—no apprehensions for the future; dead to all the calls of mercy stupid under all the means of grace. It is to be habitually in such a frame of mind, that all promises and threatenings are alike disregarded, and all motives and appeals equally unavailing. As the dead man feels not the burning of the coal lodged in his bosom, nor the flinty rock the softening influences of the showers of heaven, even so it is with him whose heart is hardened. He may be in the sanctuary, but the most pungent discourses make no impression. He may witness sacramental scenes, but they inspire no solemnity—even funeral rites and the burial of the dead affect him not. Spread before him the glories of heaven, and he is not allured; point him to the torments of the damned, and he is not alarmed. Lead him to Calvary, and talk to him about the love of Jesus and his dying agonies and he is as insensible as steel. Friends may intreat, but he heeds not; ministers may warn, but he repents not. Others may feel, but he feels not; others may weep, but he weeps not. He is hard as rock; or say,

"——Some alarming shock of fate
Strikes through his wounded heart,
The sudden dread! another moment, and alas!
——where past the shaft no trace is found,
As from the wing no scar the sky retains,
The parted wave no furrow from the keel."

The rock may be rived, but it is rock still. It may be broken into a thousand fragments, but there is no softening yet; and so it is with the sinner, when the drawings of heaven resisted, and the Spirit quenched, the sinner is left to himself, and becomes incorrigible and hardened—past feeling and past hope! Let me be poor, let me be a bondman, let me be a beggar, but let me not give up of the Spirit, be a hardened sinner! O my God, cast me not away from thy presence, neither take thine holy Spirit from me. Fellow-sinners, take care what you do just now. You are in solemn circum-

stances, and great interests are at stake! Many of you are under the influence of divine drawings now, and some, perhaps, who are not fully aware of it. Oh! remember

"God's Spirit will not always strive
With hardened, self distroying men;
You who persist his love to grieve
May never hear his voice again."

For the Prayer-Meeting

THE SAILOR BOY'S PRAYER.

The Cordelia was a good ship; but at one time we feared she was on her last voyage. We were but a few days out from the harbor, when a severe storm of five days' continuance overtook us. I must tell you of an act performed by a sailor boy at the height of the storm. He was literally a boy, and far better fitted for thumbing a spelling-book than furling a sail in a storm. The ship was rolling fearfully, some of the rigging got entangled at the mainmast head, and it was necessary that some one should go up and put it right. It was a perilous job. I was standing near the mate, and heard him order that boy to do it; he lifted his cap, and glanced at the swimming mast, the boiling sea, at the steady, determined countenance of the mate. He hesitated in silence a moment; then rushing across the deck, he pitched down into the forecastle; perhaps he was gone two minutes, when he returned, laid his hands upon the ratlines and went up with a will.

My eyes followed him till my head was dizzy, when I returned and remonstrated with the mate for sending the boy aloft. "He will not come down alive, and why did you send him?" "I did it," replied the mate, "to save life; we've sometimes lost men overboard, but never a boy; see how he holds like a squirrel; he is more careful: he'll come down safe I hope." Again I looked till tears dimmed my eyes, and I was compelled to turn away, expecting every moment to catch a glimpse of his last fall.

In about fifteen or twenty minutes he came down and walked aft with a smile on his countenance.

In the course of the day, I took occasion to speak to him, and asked him why he hesitated when ordered aloft? "I went Sir," said the boy, "to pray." "Do you pray?" "Yes, Sir; I thought that I might not come down alive, and I went to commit my soul to God." "Where did you learn to pray?" "At home; my mother wanted me to go to the Sunday-school, and my teacher urged me to pray to God to keep me, and so I do." "What was that you had in your pocket?" "My Testament, which my teacher gave me; I thought if I did perish. I would have the Word of God close to My heart."

A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN.

A CHRISTIAN does not turn his back upon the fine things of this world, because he has no natural capacity to enjoy them, no taste for them; but because the Holy Spirit has shown him greater and better things. He wants flowers that will never fade; he wants something that a man can take with him to another world. He is like a man who has had notice to quit his house, and having secured a new one, he is no more anxious to repair, much less to embellish and beautify the old one; his thoughts are upon the removal. If you hear him converse, it is upon the house to which he is going. Thither he sends his goods; and thus he declares plainly what he is seeking.

"IS THAT MOTHER?"

AMONG the many brave, uncomplaining fellows who were brought up from the battle of Fredericksburg, was a bright eyed intelligent young man, or boy, rather, of sixteen years, who belonged to a Northern regiment. He appeared more affectionate and tender than his comrades, and attracted a good deal of attention from the attendants and visitors. Manifestly the pet of some household, he longed for nothing so much as the arrival of his mother, who was expected, for she knew he was mortally wounded and failing fast. Ere she arrived, however, he died. But he thought she had come, for while a kind lady visitor was wiping the death sweat from his brow, as his sight was failing, he rallied a little, like an expiring taper in its socket, looked up longingly and joyfully, and in the tenderest pathos whispered quite audibly, "Is that mother?" in tones that drew tears from every eye. Then, drawing her towards him with all his feeble power, he nestled his head in her arms like a sleeping infant, and thus died, with the sweet word "mother" on his quivering lips.

GOD REVEALED IN REDEMPTION.

SUPPOSE you are standing over against some palace, and it is near midnight, and the gates are opened. Forth from that palace gates there comes a procession. The Prince has come forth attended by many of his train. He has not gone far, however, before you hear that the Prince has dropped a beautiful gem. He is anxious about that gem not simply for its intrinsic value, but it was the gift of one he loved, and he calls for lights. You never saw the Prince in your life, and in that dim darkness you have not been able to see much, except a very imperfect outline of him; but now a lamp has come, and the Prince in his anxiety to find his gem takes the lamp in his own land, and there he his looking for the lost gem. Now, the light which falls on the road where that gem is lying goes up also into the face of the Prince, and while he finds his gem you see him as you never would have seen him but for that loss. Now, it is like that with the revelation of God. I tell you that when the great God came forth from the retirement of eternity—when he came forth from the shrouding darkness that had been about him in his own eternity, to the salvation of men, there was light which, while it was thrown on the poor, lost sinner that he might be found, was thrown upon the face of God, who came to seek him and to save him.

You know creation is not a manifestation of the personalities so much as manifestation of the nature of God. It shows forth not the personalities as distinguished from each other, but it shows his eternal power and Godhead; but when you get the plan of salvation the personal distinctions come out. You see the Father loving, pitying, giving his Son; you see the Son coming to redeem; you find the Spirit applying; and thus you get a revelation of that wonderful deep of God's inner life—the personal distinctions of the Holy Trinity; and perhaps if it had not been for this plan of salvation, these things might not have been known to any of his creatures; and thus the redemption of man is a lesson with regard to the nature of God, and the very angels themselves were taught by what was witnessed here.—*Rev. S. Cole.*

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SERMON X.*

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THE MORAL CAUSES OF OUR NATIONAL CALAMITY

"O LORD, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces as at this day."—DANIEL 9: 7.

THE prophet Daniel was a man of marked integrity. Born a prince and the prime minister of several successive heathen kings, he yet preserved a spotless character. And God honoured his singular integrity by shielding him from the malice of his enemies, and continuing him in office and in favour under different rulers and dynasties.

But the cares of state and the favour of princes did not lead him to forget that he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, nor lessen his sympathy for his people in their captivity, or his grief over the desolations of his fatherland. His mind dwelt on the state and prospects of his unhappy country, scattered and punished of God. He studied the prophecies which related to the captivity to know "the times and seasons" which God had determined respecting the desolations of his country. And knowing from these that the appointed time of the captivity was drawing to a close, he stirred up his soul to take hold on God with prayer and supplication. The

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certainty of the event already declared in prophecy did not supersede the necessity of prayer; his personal integrity did not free him from a participation in the Divine judgment which rested on his people; and hence he mourns and confesses in sackcloth and ashes as if the sin of Israel were all his own. It was a day of Divine rebuke, and instead of pleading his own innocence and casting the blame on others, he binds the burden of guilt and woe to his own soul, and his patriotism and piety find fitting expression in sackcloth and prayer.

"And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him and to them that keep his commandments: we have sinned and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments; neither have we harkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces as at this day; to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel that are near and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespasses which they have trespassed against thee." And in a similar strain he continues to pour out his confessions and supplications till the time of the "evening oblation," when the angel Gabriel was sent to assure him that his prayers were answered.

Daniel makes a full and hearty confession of the national sin; he goes into particulars and specifies the sins which had so offended God; he charges the guilt upon all, "the kings and princes, the fathers and all the people of the land;" he traces their national calamity to *moral* and not to political causes, and he vindicates God's severe dealings with his people while he heartily repents with his hand on his mouth and his mouth in the dust.

The example of Daniel at a time of great national calamity commends itself to us to-day. The hand of God is heavy upon us as a people. We see a day of evil which none ever dreamt of as likely to overtake us. We have been suddenly stopped in our splendid and prosperous career. Civil strife and war rage throughout our borders. The arm of a gigantic rebellion is lifted to destroy our magnificent inheritance and rend in twain this great republic. The "Stars and Stripes"—the symbol of our nationality, and till now every where feared and respected—have been insulted and trodden in the streets, and have lost their prestige among the nations. Already two anxious years of peril, strife, and carnage have passed over the land, and lives without number have been sacrificed, property which no figures can compute has been destroyed, and oceans of tears and sorrow have flowed. No interest, no class, no community, no sex or condition, no State, city, or hamlet has escaped. *War*—war with all its devastating and demoralizing and burdensome agencies is upon us, and we have no alternative but to fight it out to the bitter end; and what the result will be; and when, and through how many more baptisms of darkness

and blood the end will come, no human sagacity can forsee. It is a day of extreme distress and fear. God has a controversy with us, and has risen up to punish us. And if we will not repent and give glory to him, he will cause yet greater darkness.

The Christian patriot in such a day of evil will follow the example of Daniel, and instead of quarrelling about the agencies which have brought this sore trouble upon us, or crying "peace, peace," while the *causes* of the calamity remain in full force, he will hear the voice of God speaking to him in the inflicted judgment, and will enter his closet and make it a matter of personal concern between his soul and God, and will join with the people in saying: "*O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces as at this day.*" The obvious duty of every citizen is, to accept the present state of our country as a matter of fact, and shape his course by it. Not a soul of us can say that he had no agency in bringing it about, and before God and the world shares none of the responsibility of a speedy and righteous deliverance from it. Instead of speculating about the *political* reasons of our calamity, or the share of this or that section or party or policy in producing it, let us, on this occasion at least, go deeper and search for the *moral* causes; let us put ourselves in relation with God, and see what abundant occasion we have for humiliation, confession, and repentance.

God deals with nations as with individuals. As nations exist only in this world, they are more fully rewarded or punished here than are individuals who will exist in another state. In their history God will sooner or later vindicate the principles of righteousness, and honour his moral government. The operation of the great laws of God's moral and providential government will and do secure the like *results* on nations and on individuals. *Righteousness* is as sure to exalt the one as it is the other, and *sin* is as sure to work evil and ruin in one case as in the other. A nation can no more sin against God and prosper in the long run than can an individual. Political economy, a wise and equitable constitution, a sagacious and vigorous administration; good laws, standing armies, and immense resources are no defence or security to a people when once God's favour has been forfeited. His providential government is superior to these, and will override them all, and work out in the long run such results as shall vindicate his moral administration. And to bring this about—to overwhelm a nation with just retribution—it is not necessary for God to work *miracles* or arrest the natural course of things. Sin punishes and ruins an individual without using any violence or supernatural agency, but simply by corrupting his principles, vitiating his tastes, gradually undermining his virtue, and leading him on step by step in the way of transgression till he is ripe for ruin. And so with *nations*. The causes of ruin are not from without; nor are they sudden and violent in their growth. They will be found to be inherent in the body politic—deep-seated as are the sentiments and habits of a people—in-woven into the very texture of their national character and life, slowly diffusing their poison into the life-blood, and silently sapping the foundations of public virtue and strength till the whole superstructure is rotten and ready to fall. There are *moral* causes operating through natural channels and agencies to bring down

retribution on the people who have transgressed. We are amazed at the *suddenness* as well as at the extent of the calamity which has come upon us, and leaving God and moral causes out of view, no adequate reason for it can be assigned. But if we will carefully review our national history, we shall find that there have been moral causes long at work and gaining force year by year till they have culminated in a tremendous Divine judgment, which at one fell swoop levels all our pride and greatness and confidence in the dust, and makes the nation tremble for its very life. It matters not that you can put your finger on political heresies, and party corruptions, and sectional interests which tend to bring about such a calamity; deeper than all these, and more potent as elements of retribution, there has been SIN in the national heart and life—moral offences which have at length brought the God of Justice forth to punish us with a swift and inevitable retribution.

It has been the *method* of God's government in all the ages past sooner or later to overthrow and destroy nations that have grown wicked and corrupt. From every page of history the truth is taught: "Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth." A voice comes to us to-day from many a fallen city and kingdom warning us against those sins which caused their overthrow, and declaring how vain are numbers, wealth, and greatness; how vain armies, navies, and the munitions of war, when once the anger of a righteous God is kindled against a people. Looking back over the tract of history we see little besides the shadows and fragments of thrones, scepters, and nationalities, which were, but now are not. Where are the glory and renown of Assyria and Babylon? The grandeur of Memphis and Thebes and of ancient lettered Egypt, the mighty scepter of the Ptolemies and Pharoahs, have departed. Carthage, which once ruled over three hundred states, now slumbers on the African shore. Tyre, Balbec, Nineveh, and Palmyra are in ruins. The Grecian, the Macedonian, and the Persian empires have long ago past away. And the gates of the holy city are desolate, and the chosen people of God have been cast off.

And *wherefore*, this decay of national life and greatness? Why these ruined cities, and empires, and nationalities? If we turn to the Scriptures we have the answer. These very cities and kingdoms we find were warned by God's prophets, while yet they were mighty and flourishing, that sin would work their ruin; that, persisting in their evil ways, utter desolation would one day come upon them. And history steps forth to-day and testifies that God's prophetic word has been signally verified. Natural causes, doubtless, had something to do with their decay and ruin; but the main cause was a *moral* one. God's providence vindicated his broken law and fulfilled prophecy; and the Jew is accordingly to-day an outcast, and Babylon and Nineveh are no more, and the mighty nationalities of former ages have been swept into oblivion.

And have *we* given no occasion for a similar visitation? Is not God as righteous to-day, as truthful, as determined to vindicate the right as when he overthrew the governments of antiquity, and swept the people to ruin? Is sin any the less hateful, any the less potent as an element of national ruin? See we nothing in our past conduct to explain and justify [redacted]ere dealings with us to-day?

Let us search out and specify in our confessions, as Daniel did, the particular sins for which we have reason to believe God is visiting the nation with judgment. Among the moral causes of our national calamity I name

I. THE DECAY OF THE VIRTUE OF PATRIOTISM.

That there has been a fearful falling away in this particular during the last three or four decades of years, among the people generally, and among those in office, cannot be denied. Feeling secure, and intent on gain, the mass of the people have thought and cared but little about our country, and have resigned its legislation and the administration of its affairs into the hands of the mere politician. They had ceased, to a great extent, to feel their individual responsibility for the nation's integrity and prosperity; had ceased to teach the stirring and heroic history of our fathers to their children, and had suffered their love of country, and love for its free and glorious institutions to grow old. Previous to this visitation, the feeling of nationality, heroic virtue, jealousy for our liberties, a sense of individual responsibility, and a high-toned patriotism had almost disappeared from among us. And not till the fall of Sumter lifted the curtain, and disclosed to our dismay the ship of state already reeling and plunging amidst the breakers, did there seem virtue and life enough left, either in the Government or the people, to make a vigorous effort to save even the nation's imperilled existence. And no less a judgment would have taught us our folly and sin in entrusting the interests and destinies of this great nation to our professional politicians; or have served to bring back into the nation's heart the life-blood of patriotism, and made the individual citizen to feel that he owes a solemn duty to the country and Government which nourishes and protects him—a duty which he can not neglect without sinning against God and endangering the nation's welfare.

The people have sinned in thus suffering the fire of genuine patriotism to go out on the national altar, and in neglecting the first and most sacred duties of citizenship. And our *politicians* have sinned in taking advantage of this indifference, and neglect to get into power and rule the nation for merely selfish or party ends. I do believe that this class of men have far more to answer for to God and to our bleeding and suffering country than is generally supposed. I would not deal in sweeping declarations. There have been honorable exceptions. I speak of that large class of politicians who have made a trade of politics, and have sought to use the ballot-box, and office, and official patronage for corrupt, or personal, or at best, merely party purposes. This class of men have had their own way for a long while past. They have originated parties and shaped their policy, created platforms, rallied the people at the ballot-boxes, put in office and disposed of public patronage, and thus really controlled our national affairs. This class belonged to no one political party or geographical section, but to all, and they had filled the land and the high places of trust and power with corruption and rottenness. Not the people, in their virtuous choice, but a class of politicians, by their intrigues and unscrupulous tactics, have managed to control the ballot-boxes of thirty millions of people, and fill our offices, and make and administer our laws, and grow fat on the spoils.

And not till they had brought the nation to the very verge of ruin did there seem any way of deliverance from their dreadful thraldom; the people seemed only too willing to have it so.

But the day of *reckoning* has come at last to this class of evil-workers, and their power is mainly gone. God grant it may be for ever! The instincts of the people, now that they are aroused, teach them where the main fault lies, and repentant for their delinquency, they have risen up in righteous indignation to cast their party hacks and party tools to the moles and the bats, to overthrow the tables of our political money-changers, and scourge from the temple the men who have long polluted its shrines. It *needed* some such tremendous visitation to make the people conscious of their sin, and force them to take the power into their own hands, and break down and sweep into a common ruin the old corrupt organizations and party cliques and ties and watchwords, and leave the nation free to build again on new and better foundations. The lesson has been dearly bought, but it will not soon be forgotten.

II. Nearly allied to this, and in fact growing out of it, is THE SPIRIT OF DEMAGOGUISM WHICH HAD GROWN RAMPANT IN THE LAND.

Time was when the ballot-box was looked upon as sacred. But it is idle to say that under the system of things which had grown up among us it was so any longer. Bribery had become a common thing, and was carried to a fearful extent. Party discipline and official patronage and influence had come to sway a tremendous coercive power at the polls. Demagoguism had become a power in the nation, and its hand was on the elective franchise of the people, debasing it to its own low and wicked uses.

Time was also when the best men were chosen to office. During the first half century or more of our Federal existence, no country in the world could show more wise and good and great men in public life than our own. Our national Legislature, in point of talent, wisdom, and integrity, stood out conspicuously before the world. The same was true of our Presidents and their cabinets, our foreign ministers, and our State and municipal Governments. Men of ability, worth, weight of character, probity, and capacity, were put in power. A man's availability, or party services, or skill in political tactics, or his clamor for office, did not then constitute the main claim. But it were an insult to the character of the American people to say that the men into whose hands the legislation and administration of the nation have been for a long while past were the *best* it could furnish. The learned professions of the country were never better filled than during this same period. There was never a higher order of ability and worth in the men who control and carry on our mighty commerce. There was never before so much intelligence, sagacity, and thrift among our farmers and mechanics. There has been a high order of talent, character, and thrift *everywhere, save in the legislation and government of the country.* There we look in vain for it, as a general thing. The fact is so notorious that no one pretends to deny it. Men have filled the highest offices of trust and power who had nothing to fit them [redacted]. Our national Legislature had sunk from its high position [redacted] character and public estimation than I dare to characterize it.

The men who have made and executed the laws of this nation for not a few years past—who have controlled our vast governmental wealth and shaped our policy, and who have represented our institutions before the people and among the nations of the world—have failed, to a very great extent, to command respect and confidence. Often have they disgraced the legislative hall and official position by mental imbecility, by political empiricism, by the low arts of demagoguism, by language and manners befitting a ruffian, and by the most shameful peculations.

It is a sad day for a people when the reigns of government are held by such hands. The government is shorn of its chief strength. The force of law is impaired. Legislation is perverted and thrown into chaos. The people are corrupted by such examples. And the ship of state is liable to founder, as ours has, during the first storm which overtakes her.

This evil had grown to such a magnitude that men of real ability and fitness were unwilling to accept office; to enter the lists with unscrupulous competitors who had no character to lose; to fight with demagogues and gladiators, and come in contact with corruption and profligacy which flaunted so unblushingly in all high places. Or, if willing to make the personal sacrifice for the country's good, they were seldom *available* men. Real talent, a large experience, incorruptible integrity, true independence, and a high-toned character have been, for no little time, rather *damaging* qualities in candidates for office. Such men are not manageable, and the demagogue politician is afraid of them. A man of no character, or of easy principles, of no marked capacity, no high sense of honor and integrity, was a more pliant tool, and more available for party purposes or for evil and designing men. *Availability, and not personal fitness,* had grown to be the common test for office. And under this system the places of trust and power, for the most part, were filled with weak or reckless and corrupt men. Had not the Government of this land become thoroughly *demoralized* in all its organic functions and departments, and morally effete, the calamity which we deplore to-day had not come upon us. God is punishing our sin in the very line of our offence. But for imbecility or moral weakness on the part of those high in office, Rebellion had been met and crushed at the outset. But for official corruption and betrayal on a scale so vast as to astound the nation and the world, this conspiracy had been without arms or material resources to sustain it. Through the fault of the people demagoguism had virtually shut wisdom, integrity, and moral worth out of the high places, and crowded ignorance and weakness, corruption and profligacy into them; and hence, in the day of the nation's trial, rebellion is here fostered and armed, and the Government and people are shamelessly betrayed by their own official representatives.—This spirit of evil is receiving a just rebuke. God is pouring out upon it the vials of his wrath. Let the people see to it that it never lifts its head again among us.

III. THE WANT OF A DUE REVERENCE FOR LAW AND ORDER had become a crying sin in the land.

Law must be respected and reverenced by the people, and by those who enact and administer it, or it can not secure the ends of good government.

Law, when it springs out of the necessities and convictions of the people, and is wisely and vigorously administered by the appointed guardians, is the highest earthly power to overawe wickedness, restrain corruption, and secure justice between man and man. So long as law is supreme, and finds a quick and loyal response in the hearts of the people, they are safe. Law and order are associated, and they are the two great pillars which uphold the state. Hence to weaken regard for law in any way, to strip law of its sacred and divine attributes in the minds of the people; or to tamper with its authority; or to corrupt its functions, or bend it to subserve other than the simple ends of impartial and divine justice, is to imperil all that is dear in national existence.

Here again the nation has sinned. Various causes have been at work to impair the force of law. We have sacrificed the Puritan idea of government as a *divine* institution for the social compact theory which resolves government into the will of the people, and knows no higher law than expediency. Our large and growing foreign population come to us with very false ideas of liberty. The character of our politics has sadly influenced the administration of justice. Much of the legislation of the country has served to bring law into discredit. The corruption of our officials has had a most damaging effect. Our courts and juries have not always been above the reach of party intrigue, government influence, and popular clamor. Lynch law has had far too many apologists. Radicalism and infidelity, socialism and sectionalism, have been busy in sowing the seeds of sentiments rife with danger and ruin. But whatever the causes, the fact is patent. Law and government were no longer held, either by our rulers or people, as a thing sacred and inviolable as the Divine authority and justice. The forms of law were disregarded by multitudes, and set aside. Often our laws were openly resisted and set at defiance. In many places they were but imperfectly administered, and in others stultified by popular sentiment. Thousands have gone unwhipt of justice from sheer favoritism or fear, or through bribery or weakness of the judicial power. Crimes of all sorts have frightfully increased in number and atrocity, because the tone of moral sentiment had been so lowered, and the religious view and sense in regard to government perverted. Conviction for the deepest crimes had come to be often impossible. For years the *slave-trade*, branded as piracy by the civilized world, had been carried on extensively by ships carrying our flag, and fitted out in our ports, and owned by our citizens, and not an offender could be brought to justice. Disaster upon disaster on sea and land had astounded the community and murdered our citizens by wholesale; and though drunkenness, incompetence, or recklessness was known to be the cause, the law had no power to avenge the crime, and throw its shield of protection over the community by convicting and punishing the guilty. The power of wealth, and station, and corporate influence, and a vitiated public sentiment had grown to be so great an evil that the law was often unable to cope with it, and the bonds of social and political life were fast falling to pieces. Nor can it be denied, and the fact is worthy of special note, that a considerable party at the North, in their zeal for the overthrow of slavery, have long and bitterly denounced the Constitution, and arrayed themselves in spirit and

teaching against the execution of laws believed to be in favor of the institution, and sometimes have gone so far as to resist and set the law at defiance—sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind.

The national conscience had thus become debauched or frittered away. Even the *oath* to support the laws and the Constitution had come to be a small thing—a mere form with many, to be violated on the first occasion without shame or compunction. Resistance to law, rebellion against the powers that be, and even the organized effort to overthrow the Government by force of arms, had nothing in them sinful or repugnant to the minds of our Southern brethren at least; and thus the great moral support of the nation was gone. Had not the public mind and conscience become fearfully misled and demoralized in regard to the sanctity and divine obligations of law and government as the ordination of God and the embodiment of his presence and authority among us, this rebellion could not have so suddenly and in such fearful magnitude been developed; it could not have put on so bold a face before the world, and so confidently appealed to the God of battles to sanction and crown with success their mad and terrible purpose.

And here lies their greatest sin. It is not a war upon the North; a war upon party or sectional interests; a war upon opinions, or habits, or classes, or races merely; but it is rank REBELLION against constitutional law; a high-handed blow to strike down "the powers that be," which are ordained of God; armed resistance to the will of the people expressed in lawful forms. And if this rebellion succeed, law is utterly prostrated in this land, order is subverted, and universal anarchy must reign here for ages; and the passions of the populace or a military despotism will be the only law left to us. Hence the solemn, *religious duty* of every citizen to uphold and aid the Government when thus assailed.

Our punishment again has come in the line of our offence. The people have failed to reverence law and guard its sanctity and integrity with due vigilance; and so the public conscience has grown weak and vitiated, and wicked men have taken advantage of the times to overthrow the constituted authorities and rend the great Republic, and leave us and our children exposed to all the perils and evils of a reign of terror.

IV. OUR EXTRAVAGANT WAY OF LIVING HAS GROWN INTO A VERY SERIOUS EVIL.

Our fathers were remarkable for their simplicity of manners. They had no disposition to ape the style and luxury and extravagance of the old world. They thought that great simplicity in all things became republicans. They were not ashamed of plainness and frugality. Franklin, in his plain citizen's dress and simple manners, was quite the equal in the French Court of the splendidly decorated ambassadors of other powers. The habits both of the rulers and the people were then habits of economy and industrious thrift. If our simple-mannered fathers and mothers should rise from the grave and witness our fast living and extravagant habits it would horrify them. We are by no means a wealthy people. There are few large accumulations among us as in older countries. Our business, and improvements, and the developing of our resources require,

...ays of capital. We are still borrowers ... are already in the full career of prodiga- ... disappeared; our republican simplicity ... becoming. even in our infancy, the most ... people in the world. Our social habits have ... Our sons and daughters are not reared to in- ... habits as their fathers and mothers were. ... ner expensive affair among us. The houses of ... ten palaces. Our merchants have come to live as ... nificence. It costs a little fortune yearly to keep ... extravagance of fashionable life. There are business ... whose family expenditures in years past equaled those of ... ner lands whose incomes are often fabulous. Single ... thousands a year upon dress alone, and wore jewelry ... many thousands more. Mercantile firms there were whose ... aggregate family and business expenses almost equaled the capital ... they traded. The streets of our metropolis and of other cities ... cannot be matched for costly and extravagant display in ... the old and opulent capitals of Europe. Luxurious living and the ... of display have become a passion. It rages in city and country like ... prairie fire, or the sweep of the tornado. It has been fast draining us ... our very life. It has nourished idleness, effeminacy, and dissipation. It has tempted men to the practice of fraud and dishonesty to support it. It has vitiated the manly tastes and simple habits of the people. Our social life had become godless, anti-republican—a canker eating into the very core of national virtue and life.

It is with a nation just as it is with an individual. Let a man live fast, exceed his income, waste the money he needs in his business in show or dissipation, and we know what the end will be. Material and moral bankruptcy will overtake him. He may stave it off for a while, and keep up appearances, but it will finally come; as sure as the Ides of March; as inevitably as retribution in the footsteps of guilt.

The weakening and demoralizing influence of these things are more to be deprecated also than the waste of money. The eloquent historian of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* gives a large space to this as one of the causes which produced them. Most clearly and forcibly does he trace the influence of luxury, idleness, extravagance, and social dissipation on the corruption of morals, the deterioration of the national character, the decay of strength, and the final wreck and downfal of that once iron kingdom and mistress of the world.

God has signally rebuked this our sin again and again in years past; but we would not be instructed. And now his hand is laid upon us again so visibly and so heavily, that it would seem that it must check, if it does not eradicate, the evil, and lead our people back to more simple manners and frugal habits, and restore our Government to something of its former economy and simplicity.

EXTREME DEVOTION TO MATERIAL INTERESTS is a sin intimately ... our present calamity.

It was for a higher and nobler end than the mere pursuit and enjoyment of wealth—a higher end than material grandeur and greatness—that God sifted three kingdoms to plant this new empire, and has fostered and prospered us hitherto so greatly. Our forefathers were men of a truly heroic and godly stamp. They fled from the tyrannies and wickednesses of the old world to lay anew on this virgin soil the foundations of society, political and religious. They consecrated this broad and goodly land to freedom and to God. They planted our institutions with prayers, and tears, and heroic sacrifices. They aimed high and set a lofty example. Personal aggrandizement, or a high degree of earthly prosperity, was not the goal of their ambition. Religion, humanity, manhood, liberty, and patriotism were of greater value to them than the gains of worldliness. They did not worship the *dollar* as we have come to do.

But we have degenerated from the noble virtue of our sires. There is too much truth in what has passed into a proverb that with Americans the "almighty Dollar is everything." No other nation is so devoted to money-making. It has grown into an intense, universal, and all-engrossing passion with us. We have set up this idol, and bowed down to it. Everything has been sacrificed to this. The people have no time for anything else; and in their haste to be rich, in their idolatry of material good, the claims of God's service, the duties of citizenship, the demands of family and social relations, and the scruples of conscience, and the principles of honor and righteousness have, to a fearful extent, been ignored or violated. We must own before God to-day that we are a *mammon-serving* people.

And this sordid passion has deeply injured the national character. It has fostered a low ambition. It has invested wealth with undue power. It has filled the land with covetousness. It has led us to disparage the elements of our real strength and prosperity, and often to compromise our honor and principles. It has turned the mind away from our true mission. It has sought to build up a greatness by material elements, when those of a moral, intellectual, and religious nature only possess real durability and thrift. Not our personal or national wealth; not our extended system of internal improvements; not the extent of our territory and the number of our people; not our skill and strength in war will secure our prosperity and exalt us to honor and power among the nations; but the imbuing of the people with the spirit and principles of our institutions; an unswerving devotion to the right; the moral and religious training of the masses; and making vital continually by prayer and godly living and religious revivals, those foundations which a pious and lofty-minded ancestry laid here in tears, and sweat, and blood, for the sake of civil and religious liberty and the kingdom of Christ.

The land trembles to-day under God's rebuke of this great sin. In his wrath he has smitten our idol to the ground and confounded its worshippers. He is teaching us to-day, while we sit in the dust and mourn over our fallen hopes, and blighted prospects, and scattered fortunes, and prostrate industries, and jeoparded business and wealth, that there is a higher good for a people than we have been seeking; that a character for righteousness, a heroic and patriotic spirit, a civilization vital with the life of Christianity, the honest endeavour to serve God, and the choice of the heavenly

riches, are better far and more worthy of pursuit than mere material interests.

VI. LASTLY: SLAVERY IS THE SOURCE AND OCCASION OF NOT A LITTLE OF OUR GUILT AND CALAMITY. We should fail in our duty were we to shut this subject out of our minds to-day and our confessions. I have not time to discuss at length the relations of slavery to our Government or to this rebellion. I have never, allow me to say, held extreme views on this long-agitated subject, and have discountenanced the bitter and indiscriminate crusade which a small portion of the North has waged upon the institution. Hence I believe I shall carry your convictions with me in the few words I have time to say about it on this occasion.

Four millions of human beings are held in bondage by our people to-day, or were when this war began! It is a fearful fact. Be the moral character of the system what it may, it is at war with the spirit and principles of true liberty—it is a blot on the nation's honor in this day of the world; it is an element, so uncongenial and adverse as to cause a world of strife, embarrassment, and jarring. Hence it is a *political* evil of tremendous proportions and fatal effects.

But it is more. I will say nothing to-day of the relation itself. But I look at the system as it practically exists, and has long existed in our land, and oh! what unutterable iniquity has grown out of it! How many masters fail in every duty they owe to those held in bondage by them! How many are merciless and cruel in their treatment of them! How many regard and use them only as "goods and chattels"—hold only for purposes of lust and gain those made in the image of God! What abuses are practiced; how the law of marriage is often trampled on; and what ruin of soul and body, what suffering and misery, and debasement flow from it both to the white race and the coloured! Looking only at the *abuse* of the relation, I see enough of SIN in the past treatment and the present condition of these 4,000,000 bondmen, to kindle the wrath of a just God, and unsheath his avenging sword.

And this is not *all*. The most persistent efforts have been made, and the most unscrupulous measures resorted to, in the past few years, to *extend and nationalize and perpetuate in the land* this evil and obnoxious institution. I need not rehearse here the history of this aggressive movement; but it forms one of the darkest chapters of our history. It made war upon Mexico and wrenched her territory from her. It repealed the Missouri Compromise, and sought to force slavery into the territories and forming States. It organized a Secret Association pledged to use every possible effort to give extension and effect to the system. It filled Congress and the whole country with its quarrels and daring schemes of propagandism. It manœuvred on the political chess-board to bring on a crisis; and finally forced on this terrible conflict from which there is no deliverance for us but by the sword.

The South, in this gigantic scheme to extend the area of slavery and give it political power and preponderance in the nation in all coming time, has *sinned with a high hand*. And it would seem that for this offence the

Almighty One, from amidst the thick darkness, is looking out upon the hosts of the South in this judgment, as he looked upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians at the Red Sea. This lust of extension and power in order to enthrone King Cotton, in the just providence of God, is made to re-act upon them fearfully, and is shaking the system itself to its speedy overthrow.

And the *North* was not wholly guiltless in this matter. The Government of the country was an active participant in much of this movement, and connived at the sin. And hence it was meet that God should rebuke and humble us also, the entire nation, in this day of righteous visitation.

There is a *lower* deep still to our iniquity in this matter. The framers of our Constitution—the men who achieved our liberties and gave being and form to our institutions—men like Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Patrick Henry—held slavery to be an *evil* and contemplated its ultimate extinction. This is an important historical fact which can not be denied. Let any one look into our colonial history and see what resolute and persistent efforts were made by the leading colonies—by Virginia and Georgia in particular—to keep slavery out, and when it had been forced upon them by the policy and *veto* power of the mother country, to circumscribe its evil influence and gradually eradicate it from the land. And do we not see in the loss and suffering to which England is made to endure by reason of this war, a Divine retribution, just and deserved, for her guilt in planting and fostering the iniquitous system in her American dependencies against their solemn and oft-repeated protests?

And the *Church* of the South, likewise, until a very recent period, mourned over slavery as a great sin, and prayed and looked for its final extinction. The statesmen and divines of the South have given utterance to the sternest reproofs and the severest condemnation of slavery.

But what a change—oh! what a fearful change, has come over the South in a few years! The views and position of her statesmen, her ministers, and the mass of the people, have been totally reversed. Slavery is no longer admitted by them to be an evil. The views of the fathers, the testimonies of past generations, are repudiated and set aside. Instead of an evil, it is now held to be a blessing; it is the normal state of society; the Bible justifies it; it is a Divine institution, as much so as the family, or the state; and the high and special mission of the South is to conserve and magnify and propagate the institution! The civilized world stands aghast at the utterance of such atrocious sentiments. Blindness, judicial blindness, has smitten the South. Its conscience is gone. It has come to put darkness for light, and evil for good. A terrible delusion is driving it madly and recklessly to ruin. It is resting in a *lie* and has staked all on the issue.

Surely it was *time* for God to rise in the majesty of truth and justice when men—when a whole community—when his Church, even, came thus to *make void his law*. It was fitting that his word, and the principles of his government, should be vindicated against the bold offenders by a retribution that should be memorable in all after time. And as the North has, to a large

extent, been guilty of complicity in this sin, and for the sake of southern trade, or to secure political ends, or to save the Union, has winked at this moral degeneracy, and come to look with favor on the stupendous iniquity, and yield almost everything to its craving demands; it was just that the people of the North and the Government of the country should suffer; it was just that our punishment should spring mainly out of the very sin which we had nourished, and should fall upon the very Union and the party organizations, and the business and social and ecclesiastical interests for which we sold the truth.

These are not all; but I believe they are among the moral causes which have brought us as a nation under so heavy a chastisement. There are others which will readily occur to your minds, and should receive your attention to-day.

The nature of these Causes points to the Remedy. Repentance, reformation, sincere, thorough and general, is the only thing that will deliver and save us. It is the folly of madness to think to heal *such* a hurt by political moves, by party tactics, by administrative appliances, by popular clamor, by hushing up the quarrel, or even *by fighting it out!* No; such a devil can be cast out only by much fasting and prayer. The sore can be healed only by a Divine hand. Rulers and people have *sinned*—greatly and wantonly sinned—and they must *repent* in dust and ashes before God and the world, or there is no help for us. The spirit of a deep and genuine contrition and reformation must come down on the nation, and humble and chasten and purify it. We must search out our sins, personal, social, and national, and confess them and put them away. We must realize in the depth of the national being that God is just, and we have deserved this visitation. And we must resolve to set up this memorable experience as a beacon and a landmark to warn and guide us in all coming time.

A word more and I have done. The nature of the Causes which have brought us where we are, may serve to shed *some light on the question as to the time when we may hope for deliverance.* Let us not flatter or deceive ourselves on this point. Two dreadful years of carnage and suffering have already passed over us and the time of the end is not yet. Moral causes are necessarily slow in their operation. The causes I have named as bringing this calamity upon us, have been a long while culminating. They are deep-seated and inwoven in the national sentiment and life. They cannot be corrected in a day. It is too much to expect that a year or two will suffice to show our rulers and people all their sin, and to work in the heart of the nation genuine contrition, and bring out in the life of the nation the fruit of a thorough reformation. And *until this is done,* I believe God will keep his hand heavy down upon us; and I pray that he will. He has entered upon the needed work of correction in earnest. Already the furnace glows with intense heat. The nation is smitten, humbled, broken, full of mourning and sorrow and fear. And let us not expect—nay, let us not pray for deliverance until the end of the discipline is reached; only through the humiliations of a true and hearty repentance, and a return to a renewed and higher social, political and religious life.

This dreadful war may soon come to a close and the supremacy of the Constitution and laws be vindicated and established. But will *that* alone heal our wounds, stay the thunders of Divine wrath, and restore peace and unity and prosperity to us? By no means. The nation must bow itself low before God, and humbly entreat him to turn away his anger and interpose his providence and Spirit to deliver and purify and heal us. We must as a people root out our evil habits and build anew. We must cultivate the spirit of conciliation, forgiveness, trust, magnanimity. And *when* this is done the day of our redemption will have come. The sun of a yet greater prosperity will then shine on our land and gladden all the people. And in future years, and in distant generations, the nation will look back upon this dark and memorable period as wise and merciful discipline and the seed-time of glorious blessings. But if God were to cease his correction now, before the needful change has been wrought in us, we should slide straight back into our old ways; business, pleasure, politics, legislation, government, all would return to their death-working channels; the quarrels of sections and parties would go on as before; and this terrible baptism of blood and suffering would result in no real or lasting good to the nation.

And to my mind it is manifest that we are not yet *prepared* for deliverance. The spirit of rebellion is certainly still alive and as bitter and wicked as ever. The nation is not yet sufficiently contrite and penitent. Party lines and strifes are not yet merged into an all-embracing patriotism. Minor questions are not yet lost sight of, and the mighty strength of the nation brought to bear steadily on the one great issue. Of the accursed lust of gain, and the passion for display, and the spirit of extravagance and corruption, we are not yet cured. We do not yet realize, as we should, to what an extent God is a party in this great national controversy; and that success in arms, wisdom in counsel, and salvation for us are absolutely dependent upon him. The Church of Christ has not yet fully cleansed herself, and come up to the great and solemn duty devolved upon her. Nor are we yet willing to do full justice to the millions whom we have so long enslaved, and on whose unpaid labor the nation has grown rich.

The duration of this war, if I have reasoned correctly, is not alone dependent on the vigor of the administration, and the skill of generals, and the courage of our soldiers, and grand victories in the field; but *the spirit and tempter of the people* will have much to do with it. The grand, the decisive victory, will be a *moral* one. The peace we should pray and labor for is the peace of righteousness, the boon of God's favor. And it may be so—I fear it is likely to be so—that more and deeper draughts of humiliation, sorrow and suffering are seen to be needful, and the very dregs of the cup may have to be wrung out to us, before we shall be willing to take our true place and be fitted for our mission. May God give us patience to bear it all, and courage to face the trial, and patriotism to make the required sacrifice; and finally lead us on to a victory such as shall exalt His own Government in the sight of all nations, and establish for the coming ages over all this land the principles of righteousness and liberty.

NOTE.

MILFORD, May 4th, 1863.

REV. J. M. SHERWOOD:

DEAR SIR,—The undersigned having heard, with great pleasure and, we trust with profit, your interesting discourse preached, at the united service in Plymouth Church, on the 30th ult., would hereby very respectfully request a copy of the sermon for publication.

DAN FENN,	NATHAN FENN,
DANIEL L. BALDWIN,	ANON CLARK,
THOMAS CORNWALL,	SIDNEY BUCKINGHAM,
WILLIAM B. BRISTOLL,	THOMAS DUTTON,
SAMUEL B. GUNN,	L. N. BEARDSLEY.

NEW YORK, May 7th, 1863.

GENTLEMEN,—My Fast-day sermon is at your service. Although conscious of its many imperfections, it is my prayer that it may contribute, in some slight degree, to the end for which it was written and preached.

JAMES M. SHERWOOD.

DAN FENN, ESQ., and others.

SERMON XI.

BY REV. ALEXANDER WILSON McCLURE,

CANNONSBURG, PA., LATE ONE OF THE SECRETARIES OF THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN CHRISTIAN UNION.

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT.

"The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."—EPHESIANS 6: 17.

A SWORD is one of those things which few can look upon without some emotion. The very sight of one suggests many thoughts. It kindles the pride of the holiday soldier and of the war-worn veteran. It graces the pomp of the civic festival; it gleams with emblematic solemnity in the halls of justice; and decks the coffin-lid of the departed brave. It is the token, too, of dark passions—malice, ambition and revenge. It brings to mind the throbbing heart that bleeds on the battle-plain and the widowed heart that bleeds at home. Its iron-point has graven on the monuments of the past full many a record of wrong, and violence, and woe. Tears of the fatherless, famine, plague, desolation—these are its triumphs. Burning villages, battered cities, fields fattened with carnage, and "white as snow in Salmon" with the bleaching bones of the slain—these mark the pathway of the sword. Oft has it been the accursed tool of extortion, oppression, and persecution. Oft, in the hands of tyranny and bigotry, has it mowed down the ranks of death.

Yet are there some pleasing sentiments associated with the sight of a sword. As wielded by the chivalrous champion to protect the weak; as uplifted by loyality and patriotism to defend the altar and the hearth; as raised by liberty against invasion and slavery, the sword has done good service. It has "revenged the wronged till he rendered right." Who could gaze without emotion upon the weapon once grasped by Gustavus Adolphus, that stainless hero of the Protestant faith? Or the green-handled battle-blade of George Washington, the spotless soldier of freedom? The brave defenders of their native land against sedition and rebellion have thrown around their gory weapons the garlands of security to the feeble and protection to the peaceful. Thus even the naked and polished steel may speak of safety, and promise defence to the child, the maiden, and the aged. The sword of Joshua, of Gideon, and of David, still hang bright in the armory of Zion.

But the weapons of the most famed warriors are but children's toys to that mighty weapon of the Christian's warfare—that "sword of the

Spirit, which is the Word of God." It has won all the victories of the Lord of hosts, and wrought eternal deliverances for his militant Church. Its flash in the van of the battle is Israel's ensign and rallying star.

Let us notice in what respects the Word of God, in its properties and uses, may be likened to a sword.

I. It has many of the PROPERTIES of a sword.

It has, for instance, the *brightness* of a sword. It is like the flamed falchion at Eden's gate, which turned every way to preserve the garden from the unhallowed intrusion of fallen man. Even so the Bible blazes before the everlasting doors of the celestial paradise, so that "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." It is only the dimness of the sinner's sight that enables him to look undazzled at the glowing words of Scripture in its denunciations of "the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Never with naked eye could the guilty gaze untroubled on the naked sword of the Spirit. Dazzled and faint, he would wither at its dread refulgence ere he felt its biting edge.

It has also the *keenness* of a sword. "For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." God calls his divine threatenings "the sword of his mouth." And when John saw the Son of Man in vision he tells us that "out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword." This is a symbol of the penetrating power of the cutting reproofs and denunciations which issue from his lips. Smiting either way, with double edge, it inflicts the ghastlier, deadlier blow wherever it falls. Be the heart ever so flinty, hardened, and steeled in obstinacy, and cased in three-fold mail of pride,

"This guiding sword, with discontinuous wound,"

shall smite it through. It is "bathed in heaven," and tempered to such keenness that the most stubborn spirits have fallen before it, and their pride has been laid low for ever. The legends of the North tell of a fabled demigod who forged a blade in an intense volcanic fire, and then quenched the hissing steel in an ice-cold Scandinavian stream. To test its sharpness, he threw the trunk of a tree of six cubits length into the rapid river; and as it drifted endwise against the enchanted edge, he smiled with grim satisfaction to see the wood riven in sunder by the mere force of the current. But this sword of ours, which can divide between the soul and spirit, and discriminate between the very thoughts of the heart, is a glorious reality far beyond that fabling fancy.

Again: the word of God is like a sword, because it is *pointed*. Common weapons can only smite the body, but this of the Spirit pierces far deeper, even to the inmost soul. Open the pages of Holy Writ where you will, and the point of this weapon is seen projecting, aimed at the [redacted]'s breast, and able to probe his guilty conscience to the quick,

When it enters the soul it searches the very life as it goes. It thrusts as well as cuts.

It may be added that a good sword *will not easily break*. It will give heavy blows, and take them, without shivering in pieces. It is even so, and more, with the Lord's good sword. Oft has it been rudely struck by those who would parry its thrust or ward off its stroke. Oft has it come down with cleaving force on hearts harder than flint; but it has never been shattered, nor can it be. With wondrous elasticity it will bend, and adapt itself to every joint in the sinner's harness, and then spring at once into shape again. "The Scripture can not be broken."

It thus resembles a sword in the qualities of brightness of blade, sharpness of edge, keenness of point, and power of endurance.

II. It also resembles a sword in many of its USES.

It is *a terror to evil-doers*. How many have been deterred from sin by seeing it sweeping in threatening circles over the path of transgression. How readily they would have run in the ways of iniquity but for the salutary restraints of the Book of God. It showed them the guilt, the danger, and the misery of sin. It has warned them off from forbidden ground. It has roused the slumbering conscience and tamed the raging passions. Iniquity has been abashed, and the proud heart humbled before its majesty and holiness. It has flashed conviction like lightning, and struck the soul into submission like a bolt from heaven.

The Word of God is also like a sword in its *cleaving* energy. "It divideth asunder the soul and spirit." When the word *soul* is used by Scripture in distinction from *spirit* it distinguishes the *animal* nature from the *spiritual* and *moral*. And the Bible does discriminate, with searching keenness, between a mere excitement of the imagination and nervous system and a true and lasting religious experience. It marks the wide difference between a temporary disturbance of the animal feelings and a permanent change of heart. It cuts off the delusive and decaying exercises of the animal sympathies, and tolerates only the holy affections of a renewed heart, and those holy works which are the constant evidences and fruits of a truly regenerate mind. It is "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It draws the dividing line between our selfish and depraved lusts, and the pure feelings of a heart reconciled to God and in peace with him. It hews down the guilty hopes of the rebel mind of man. It falls, with unsparing edge, upon the false confidences of the impenitent, and makes them aware that "there is no peace to the wicked." If they think, by following a multitude in doing evil, to screen themselves amid numbers, it gives them to know that "though hand join in hand the wicked shall not be unpunished." Are they expecting to hide from justice in secrecy and concealment? It bids them to be sure that "there is no darkness, nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." Do they dream of succeeding in their rebellious resistance of God? It calls them to consider "who hath hardened himself against God, and hath prospered?" Is the sinner depending upon repentance at a future day? He is cautioned not to "boast himself of to-morrow, for he knoweth not what a day may bring forth." It cuts right and left,

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Dazzled a[illegible] word is nigh thee, even in
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It [illegible] Almighty unsheathes his
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div[illegible]

[illegible] *gates of God.* Every
h[illegible] [illegible] flutters, and the dark coasts
i[illegible] [illegible] burnished blade is guided
[illegible] over the dark places of the
[illegible] victoriously, humbling the
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[illegible] affections of the heart.
[illegible] of grace join in the inspired
[illegible] of salvation: "Gird thy sword
[illegible] thy glory and thy majesty: and in
[illegible] truth, and meekness, and
[illegible] teach thee terrible things." Oh!
[illegible] to conquer."
[illegible] is a sword [illegible] *ding his kingdom on*
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[illegible] in the infernal fires.
[illegible] and helmets will be fragile as
[illegible] sword of the Lord. Nor

will this weapon cease its lightning flashes over the earth till it has forced into surrender every stronghold of Satan, and compelled rearward squadrons to take their flight from a vanquished and rescued world. When the Spirit of the Lord would lift up a standard he raises this drawn sword, and the sacramental hosts of Zion rally round it, and gather themselves from afar at the signal of its flash in the sun. In his hands it leads them on to victory, whence they return with garlands on their heads and palms in their hands. Hallelujah!

Thus the Word is useful as a terror to transgressors, as a test of spirituality, as a destroyer of false refuges, as a vanquisher of God's enemies, and as a defence to his kingdom.

REFLECTIONS.

1. We learn how ministers of the Gospel should arm themselves. As standard-bearers of God's host, as soldiers and champions of the cross, they must never ungird the sword of the Spirit, but have it ever in readiness for instant use. "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." Zion's watchmen must stand at their post, having on the whole armour of God, of which the Word of God is the most conspicuous and effective part. To them the use of all meaner weapons is forbidden. The arrow and javelin are not for them. They are not to carry on a distant fight with flying missiles; not to strike as one that beateth the air. But they are to march up boldly with the heavenly steel of divine truth, and join battle hand to hand with human depravity, and strike directly at the life of rebellion in the soul. Let them not wreathe their sword in flowers like Harnodius and Aristagiton; but draw from the scabbard the full length of the blade, and lay on right and left, and thrust the sinner through and through with the bright and beaming blade.

2. We learn that Christians are ever to act on the aggressive. They are not merely to stand on the defensive, keeping their ranks unbroken, and losing no vantage-ground which the grace of God and the sword of his Spirit have enabled them to gain. It is not enough that no territory, which has once been wrested from Satan's dominion, be ceded back to him. They must do more. They must carry the war into the enemy's territory, follow up every advantage, and press on from victory to victory. They may not cease from pursuit to fly upon the spoils or feast upon the prey. Let them not slack their militant endeavours till the world is gladly subdued to the Gospel of Christ, and is disenthralled from the tyranny of sin.

3. We learn that the Word of God is no mortal weapon. It is not the sword of man. Man did not fashion it. Its metal is not dug from the bowels of the earth, nor is it forged by human skill or mortal strength. Its material and workmanship manifest its high origin, and show the genuine marks of that brighter world from whence it came. It is fitted for a super-human arm; and no mere man, by his unaided powers, is able to wield it efficiently. It is too ponderous for our nerveless grasp. We must call in strength far higher than our own, before we can lift it with success. Vainly do we take even the sword of the Spirit for our spiritual conflicts,

unless strengthened with might by that same Spirit in the inner man. But oh! if thus succored from on high, we need not shun the contest with the proudest fiend of hell. The irresistible Word of God is, indeed, the favourite weapon of Omnipotence, in gaining those triumphs of grace which are celebrated in celestial song. Its achievements are sung by the winged bards of heaven to the rich melody of their harps of gold. This is the trenchant blade which cuts down the brazen shield of pride and the chain-mail of impenitency. The Spirit with this sword of flame, at once slays the enmity of the carnal mind, and sets the soul on fire with love. At one electric stroke, it burns up and annihilates our depravity, and kindles the flame of grace in the heart. The moral conquest of the entire world is the only earthly limit to its prevalence, when swayed by the Lord of Hosts. It is his prerogative to make it effectual; and when it is used with success in mortal hands, all their strength and sufficiency thereto is of God. And a blessed thing it is, when God girds his servants with this gracious strength. They are diligently to seek it. Every good soldier of Jesus Christ will equip himself, as the Apostle commands, with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. In the hands of his chosen people he has wrought with it great deliverances. In the early progress of Christianity, we see what he enabled them to accomplish by its means. It then carried dismay and defeat through what seemed the impregnable heathenism of the vast and haughty Roman empire. That once predominant system of idolatry, the religion of countless millions of our race, it has swept from the earth, leaving no traces of it, except its ruined shrines, and the relics of its literature. In like manner it has swept from the earth every vestige of the druidical paganism and bloody rites of our British ancestors, and of the teeming millions of Northern Europe. It has penetrated into regions, which they who boasted that they were masters of the world, confessed to be inaccessible to their arms. Where Cæsar failed, it has conquered. Where Alexander halted, it has marched on its resistless way. It was the Word of God which won the day, when the glorious Protestant Reformation overthrew the chief seats and citadels of Romish superstition. It has showed its victorious energy in many a glorious revival of religion, wherein we have seen the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes. Truth is great, and it will prevail, because it is armed with this immortal weapon, and is upheld in its use by the Spirit of God. The glad tidings of one success shall follow upon another, till solemn proclamation is made in heaven, that the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

4. We learn from our subject, that God has enemies in the world. Why else hath he a sword, which is the creature of warfare and opposition? If all were quiet here, why doth he muster the armies of heaven, and proclaim himself their leader, and bid their bannered hosts combine beneath his royal standard? Would you know, my hearers, where that enmity to God is found, against which he will fight with the sword of his mouth? Alas! you will find it strongly fortifying itself in that revolted and disobedient heart of yours. Your soul is opposed to God. His laws are offensive to you; and the breaking of them is the occupation of your life. With him, "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft," which Saul attempted to practice.

When men rebel against a good and lawful government, such as this country has enjoyed, it is very hateful to God. Still more odious is it, if they rebel against infinitely the best of all governments, that of God himself.

O fellow sinner, your only safety is in instant submission. What can you promise yourself by resisting the Spirit of God? You are surrounded completely on every side. You are hemmed in above and below. There is no help that can relieve you from this close siege. You are defenceless. You can not escape. Surrender at God's summons. Cast down the weapons of your rebellion. Do not repel the sword of the Spirit. Bare your bosom to its stroke. It wounds to heal, and kills to make alive. Happy are they who feel its power. God would not call upon you to submit, if he purposed to crush you. He could do that without your yielding. He has no wish to drag you in chains at his chariot-wheels, like an angry captive, raging with impotent malice against him and his bonds. No; rather would he smite from your limbs the fetters of sin which so long have cramped and galled them. Let him free you from your bondage with his delivering sword. O God, strike home! home to the hilt!

5. The impenitent must again meet the sword of the Spirit in the day of doom. It will be the sword of justice at the judgment of the great day. "He that rejecteth me," says Christ, "and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken shall judge him at the last day." Then will its slighted warnings come up in remembrance against you. Its testimony will convict you of having despised its reproofs; and your awful doom is already pronounced in its threatenings. Woe, woe, for the sinner lost in resisting the truth! He must meet it again in another encounter. Alas for him, when he shall confront his Judge, armed with this terrible weapon, to "cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Ah! is there no shield? Yes, one; and only one. See it on the Saviour's arm! Let him hold it over thy head. Then the uplifted sword will lose its terrors. Thou mayest cry aloud with confidence: "Behold, O God, our shield; and look upon the face of thine ANOINTED!"

here and ask you to pray for them. They belong to another regiment.

"I cannot tell you how much I have enjoyed the presence of Jesus in the regiment. I have been in all the battles. He was ever near. Men have fallen dead on my right hand, and on my left hand; but I was never afraid. I was ready. Jesus might call me from the battle-field, and I was ready. The battle-field would be the gate of heaven to me."

No report can do any justice to the tender, touching words of the young German soldier. The meeting broke down in a flood of tears. He said he should go again, and stay as long as his adopted country was in peril, and he desired the continued prayers of the meeting in his behalf.

A clergyman said he was in this meeting a few weeks ago, and asked the meeting to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon his people. Very soon after his return home he began to see signs of the presence of that mysterious power that alarms and convinces sinners of their guilt and danger, and now about fifty have been hopefully converted.

Another individual said he had asked for prayer for a prayer-meeting established in a dark place—a mere missionary effort — and God had poured down his spirit, and fifty to sixty had been converted, and a little church had been organized. All had been in answer to prayer.

Rev. Dr. Asa Smith, who guided the meeting, said that in his church a revival had prevailed since February, and about sixty or more, of all ages, had been converted. A little girl of twelve years came to be examined for admission to the church. The case was very satisfactory, and the elder said, "Maggy, what does your mother think about your joining the church?" "Mother thinks I am too young," said the girl. "Well, Maggy, what do you think about it yourself?" The little girl said, "I am not too young; Jesus wants the children."

For the Prayer Meeting.

Emblem of Salvation.

When mankind were wrecked on Eden's shore,
Loud was the tempest, loud the thunder's roar,
Earth, sea, and skies affrighted were, and tossed,
Tumultuous all. Shall man be saved or lost?
In that wild ocean of despair and dread,
The Rock of Ages lifts his lofty head;
The sinner, sinking, stunned by Sinai's shock,
By Sinai's lightning, now beholds the Rock;
With glad surprise, more clear his moral sight,
He sees besides, a cross of heavenly light;
The Rock he clambers, to the cross he clings,
And saved from danger, of *salvation* sings.

A short time since, a vessel was sailing calmly and securely over the soft blue wave. The voice of song arose, and mingled its melodies with the light air around. Home, sweet home, was the theme which gladdened every heart. But ah! thou treacherous sea! Thou deceitful wind! How changed the scene! The voice of song is departed, joy and gladness are no more. Instead of the music of soft symphonies, are heard the clamors of despair, the thunder's mighty roar—old ocean's harsh sounds, and the howling of the storm. The ship is driven fiercely

before the gale, sails are rent, one of the masts is gone by the board, ruin steers the ill-fated ship; she strikes upon a reef, the billows roll over her, the crew are washed overboard. Night thickens around with his stormy horrors; manfully the drowning wretches buffet the waves; the lightning flings its lurid glare around, and shows them their awful condition; again it lightens, and they descry a rock, lifting its head above the billows, and promising a place of safety. Hope revives—they swim for the rock, soon "they make it." See! they have got upon it. Now they are safe.

The vessel, sailing joyfully and securely before the gale began, may represent the safe and happy condition of our first parents before they were assailed by the storms of temptation; the drowning mariners denote the deplorable state of mankind since the fall, who are sinking amidst the waves of guilt and woe; the tempest overhead denotes the storm that howls over the head of every sinner, in consequence of the violation of Jehovah's law. Sinai thunders forth its curses, and flashes its lightnings around the sinner's path, in order to show him his weakness, his guilt, and his danger. As the lightning points the drowning sailor to the rock, so the law directs or opens the way to Christ, that the sinner might be justified by faith in the atonement.

The rock, rising in the troubled ocean, affording a shelter from the shipwreck, represents Christ, the Rock of Ages, who has borne all the fury of the storm for man, and who, by his cross, giveth life and light to a dying world. The penitent sinner, feeling himself sinking in the mighty waters, and tremblingly alive to the dangers of the tempest above and to the more fearful dangers of the rolling waves beneath, escapes to the Rock, embrace the cross, and is safe, *i. e.*, he believes in the Lord Jesus, and is saved.

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past,
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh! receive my soul at last.

For the Prayer Meeting

The Great Teacher.

"NEVER man spake like this man." And so you would have said if you had heard him preach. Never mortal had such doctrines to deliver, and never mortal taught in so solemn and impressive, yet so tender and affectionate a manner.

The philosophers of antiquity—they only skimmed the surface of things; they talked about the loveliness of virtue and the odiousness of vice; they speculated about the immortality of the soul and the life beyond the grave, and professed to look forward with mingled hope and fear to an hereafter, concerning which none could speak with satisfaction or with certainty. And as for the Scribes and Pharisees, who sat in Moses' seat, they only sophisticated and polluted the purity of his morality by their adding to the cumbrous mass of rites and ceremonies, by which his dispensation was distinguished, innumerable traditions and enactments of their own. But this man—he went at once to the

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spring of action in the human heart; he unfolded the foundation of moral obligation in the bonds that bind the creature to the Creator. He taught the spirituality, and purity, and perfection of the law of God. He threw a strong and steady light upon the regions of futurity, and surrrounded his hearers with the dread transactions of the judgment day, and the enduring realities of the eternal world.

"Never man spake like this man." So Nicodemus thought, when, in reply to his complimentary address, he laid down the fundamental doctrine of his Gospel, and said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." So Nathaniel thought when, casting at him his mild and piercing eye, he said, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." So Zaccheus thought when he climbed up into the sycamore tree, because Jesus was to pass that way; and he turned unto him and cried, "Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." So Peter thought when he would have reproved his Master; but the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and said, "Get behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me; for thou savorest not of the things that be of God, but those that be of man." So the Scribes and Pharisees thought when he took off the mask of hypocrisy, by which they sought to impose upon the people, and exhibited their character in all its true, odious, and disgusting colors, and thundered out the anathema, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" So Pilate thought when, in reply to his question—half, perhaps, in veneration, and half in scorn—"Art thou a king?" he answered, "Thou sayest I am a king. Thou hast announced my true and proper dignity; I am a king; but my kingdom is not of this world. I lead no conquering armies to the battle; I press not for thrones and palaces through fields of carnage and seas of blood. To this end was I born; and for this cause came I into the world, that I should witness unto the truth."

No matter where—no matter when—no matter what he said—whether in the temple surrounded by the doctors of the law, hearing and asking them questions, or whether on the deck of the vessel, surrounded by the fishermen of Galilee; or whether in the towns, and cities, and villages of Judea, healing the sick and raising the dead; or whether at the tribunal of Pilate, the object of contempt and scorn.

"Never man spake like this man." There was a power, and an authority, and an influence in all he said that nothing could gainsay or resist. The gabbling Scribes heard him, and they were confounded. The haughty Pharisees heard him, and they were abashed. The frantic *demoniac* heard him, and he was still. The *diseased* heard him, and he felt the impulses of health beat in all his veins. The *dead* heard him, and broke his silence and arose.

"Never man spake like this man." And yet the power and authority with which he spoke was not that which thrones, and sceptres, and diadems confer—it was not the power and authority of racks, and gibbets, and dungeons—it was not the power and authority of the princes and potentates of this world, who send their conquering armies to enforce their

commands, and hurl the thunders of their artillery against all who dare to resist their mandate. No; but it was the power of light beaming upon the understanding—it was the power of truth making its way to the conscience—it was the power of God speaking to mortals by his Son.

"Ye will not come to Me."

THERE are some men who wish to go to heaven with the understanding that they are entitled to the favor, or else not at all. They do not feel willing to accept heaven as a boon granted by the infinite love of a merciful God, but they desire to merit it through their own good works. They will not go up to heaven's gate and plead the atoning blood of the blessed Lamb of God, as their passport into the heavenly land—the home of the redeemed—but they offer, in exchange for the delights and the pleasures of eternity, the meager catalogue of their own actions here on earth. Is it strange that their offer is not accepted? As for myself, I know what I will do when God calls my soul to judgment. I know, when I shall look back upon my life, it will be folly to attempt to justify anything that I have ever done. I will turn to Christ and say, Thou hast promised to save me if I would trust in thee; and I have trusted in thee, and now I claim the fulfilment of thy promise, O Lord. Here I am, and my only hope is in thee. And then Christ will throw around about me the shield of his righteousness, and I shall enter heaven, not because I am not a sinner, but because I am a sinner loved and shielded of Christ. But you refuse to take this Christ at his word; you reject his proffered mercies, and therefore he will reject you.—*Rev. H. W. Beecher.*

What Thou Doest, do Quickly.

QUICK, young man! life is short. A great work is before you, and you have no time to lose. If you would succeed in business, win your way to honor, and save your soul, you must work quickly. The sluggard dies. The wheels of time roll over him, and crush him while he sleeps. Aim high and work hard. Life is worth the living, death worth the dying, because worth the gaining.

Quick, ye men of might in the road of life! Your life is more than half gone already. You are going down the hill, and the shadows begin to fall around you. If you have aught to do before ye die, do it quickly. The morning has fled, mid-day has passed, and the night cometh.

Quick, ye aged man, quick! Once you thought threescore years and ten to be an endless time, and that they could never pass away. They have come, they have gone, and what have they left? The days of pleasure are past, and the days of darkness are here. Have you left any work undone? Have you come to infirmities and trembling, with no preparation for death? Ah! quick ye aged fathers and grey-bearded sires. Already are the messengers of death beginning to tender their services, to bring you to the sepulchres of your fathers. With the feeble remnants

of existence struggle for heaven. Work, pray, seek while life lingers, mercy waits, and God is gracious!

I Ought to Pray More

For one, I am convinced that I do not pray enough. I feel this conviction daily. As a half-fed man is conscious that he needs more food, so my half-famished soul tells me that I need more prayer. I need it to give me strength, to quicken my languishing graces, to enliven my affections, to vitalize my relations to the Church, and to spiritualize all my conversation.

I must pray more. I am in a world of sin; unholy influences are pressing me on every side. The spirit of the world assails me at every step. In all the domestic, social, and business relations of life, I meet it, and feel it, and without *more prayer*, I shall yield to it. Alas, I *have* yielded; I am still yielding, and there is no alternative but *more prayer!* I *must* pray more, or be swept down by the tide. Lord, save, or I perish.

I will pray more. A good resolution! May I have grace to keep it! How many such have been broken? Let me, then, first of all, pray for grace to do what I see needs to be done. And let me remember that it is *prayer* that I need, communion with God, intercourse with heaven, fellowship with the Holy Spirit. I need the *penitence*, humility, self-abasement, and self-renunciation which prayer alone can secure. I need the faith, and hope, and love which prayer alone can awaken.

I will pray more, then, because it is my duty to do so. I am morally and spiritually unfit to engage in God's service as I am. I have reason to fear that my offerings may be an abomination to the Lord. But my obligation to serve God remains. I *ought* to do Christian duty, and bring my gifts to the altar. And God is waiting to be gracious! willing to give his Spirit to those who ask him.

Then I ought, and must, and will pray more for others, for my family, friends, the church, the world, and especially for *my pastor!* alas, how have I forgotten *him* of late. Lord, take not from me thine Holy Spirit! Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation, and uphold me by thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Oh! teach me and *help* me to pray. My fainting and inconstant heart turns thee. Oh! strengthen me with strength in my soul.

The Judge of All.

THERE are *five* properties which constitute a perfect Judge. Some of those are found in some judges, but all of them in no Judge but Jesus Christ. These properties are:

1. A full and sharp *apprehension*. An ignorant judge makes wretched the innocent. Ignorance in a private person is weakness, in a judge it is wickedness. No ignorance will be found in Jesus Christ as Judge, concerning any cause adjudicated by

him. "His eyes are as a flame of fire!" Clear to penetrate, and certain to find out all secrets.

2. Boldness of mind, or undaunted *courage*. A timorous judge generally loses the cause to him who ought to win it, or disgraces himself. The fable of the hart being judge between the wolf and the lamb, and deciding for the wolf, shows out a man-fearing judge. No fear will be found in Christ as a Judge. The kings and judges of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the chief captains, the mighty men, the bond and the free, must all stand before Him, and would fain hide themselves in holes, and rocks, and mountains to escape his judgment.

3. *Honesty* of conscience. The judge who dares be corrupted will corrupt the truth. Woe be to that judge, as one says, who has *venalem animam*, a saleable soul. Felix was such a judge, who "hoped money would have been given him by Paul." He that sells justice for money, shall himself lose both mercy and his soul. "They take a bribe and turn aside the poor in the gate from their right" Money is a key to open all doors. In Italy, it opens the door of death. Do you hate a man? There you may have him pistoled or poisoned for money. In France, it opens the door of licentiousness. There money will buy every sensual gratification. In Spain, it opens the door injustice. There the cause is sure to go on the rich man's side. In England, it opens the door of power. There money makes the gentleman. In Rome, it opens the door of heaven. There it buys the keys of the kingdom, the altar, and Christ! But "the worthy Judge eternal" will take no bribes, nor will he procrastinate or prevent any cause.

4. *Impartial* justice. Tully gives us a proverb, *exuit personam judicis, quisquis amici induit.* He hath put off the person of a judge, who puts on the person of a friend. Seneca says, he that justifies the guilty, transfers the guilt to himself. The Lord Jesus will not thus act. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

5. *Equity* of sentence. The sentence to be just must be founded on the guilt proved by competent witnesses, and be according to law. This was Christ's way with the woman. "Where are those thine accusers?" John 8 : 10. "Every one shall receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil," 2 Cor. 5 : 10. Thus in Christ as Judge, we see perfect apprehension, perfect courage, perfect honesty, perfect impartiality, and perfect equity of sentence!

Lastly, he is Judge of all! Before him must appear angels and devils, believers and unbelievers, good and evil, and be "judged out of the things written in the book." What a glory to the true Church to have such a King, Lawgiver, and Judge as Jesus Christ is! How arrogant and vile must the pretensions of the Pope be, to presume to judge men, and be free from judgment himself, for this he asserts. Truly he meaneth himself as God sitting in the temple of God. What glory it is to the true saints to be freed from the Pope's usurpations, and have Christ himself to be their Governor and Judge.

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SERMON XII.

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THE MODE OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL THAT IS ADAPTED TO SUCCESS.

"THEY both went together into the Synagogue of the Jews and so spake that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed."—ACTS 14; 1.

THIS is the testimony which Luke, the inspired historian, has given of the preaching of Paul and Barnabas at Iconium. We are not to doubt, therefore, that the testimony is true; and it assures us not only that a great multitude were at that particular time cordially converted to the faith of Jesus, but also that the Apostles preached in such a manner as was adapted to secure this very result. "They so spake," that a great multitude believed; or, as the original Greek may be more fully translated, they spake in such a manner "as that a great multitude believed."

The preaching of the Gospel is sometimes represented as having no tendency whatever to promote the conversion of sinners; as being as little adapted to secure such a result as was the lifting of the rod by Moses over the Red Sea, to part the waters, or as was the blowing of ram's horns around the city of Jericho, to prostrate its walls. But so thought not this early and inspired historian of the Church. Conversions he represented as changes wrought in the soul by spiritual influence, and not has physical miracles. He believed that the ministrations of Paul and Barnabas in the synagogue of Iconium were adapted to secure the blessed result which ensued—the conversion of a great multitude.

The interesting occasion on which we are assembled leads us to contemplate the nature and objects of the Christian ministry. And I flatter myself that I shall not conduct you into an inappropriate or uninteresting field of contemplation if I follow out the theme which this sacred historian has set before me, namely that there is a mode of preaching the Gospel which is adapted to secure the cordial faith of hearers.

I will attempt to show that there is such a mode of preaching the Gospel, and to point out some of the things in which it essentially consists.

I. There is a mode of preaching the Gospel which is adapted to secure the faith of hearers.

The testimony of the inspired Luke on this subject, as I have already intimated, is decisive. The testimony is direct and positive to the very point in question, given in language so plain as not to admit of evasion; and sanctioned as authoritative by the Spirit of Inspiration. I see not why I need argue a point which is settled at once by the summary and satisfactory process of referring to an unequivocal declaration of the Word of God.

Yet since the testimony of inspiration is always harmonious with itself and with all other truth, it may serve perhaps to render the whole subject more clear to our apprehension if we look at some considerations which directly concur with the declaration of Luke. I will ask you, therefore, to consider attentively the two following observations which go to confirm its truth; one, that the Gospel itself is adapted to beget the cordial faith of mankind; and the other, that there is a mode of preaching it which brings its power more fully on the minds of hearers.

The Gospel itself is adapted to beget cordial faith and repentance in men. For evidence of this, I would call your attention to the fact that the Holy Spirit employs the Gospel for this very purpose. The fact itself is very obvious. Indeed, no reason can be conceived why the Holy Spirt caused the words of the Gospel to be recorded and published in their present permanent form, but to furnish a means for calling men to a cordial faith in Christ and reconciliation with God, and for perfecting believers in their sanctification and fitness for heaven. Yet we have his own explicit testimony that it is through his own word of grace that he calls men to repentance and faith. What other interpretation can be given to those numerous passages which speak of believers as being called of God? These passages assert that God calls them—that he calls them out of darkness into light, into the grace of Christ, to the fellowship of his Son, to holiness, to his kingdom and glory, to eternal life. The very idea of a call from God implies that it is made through the medium of some

word from God like the Gospel. It implies that men are, through some medium, intelligibly addressed by some word of command or invitation proceeding forth from God, and that, when effectual, it enkindles in their hearts a willing compliance and obedience. And what other medium is there beside the Gospel. Just so Paul interprets the matter. To the Romans, after speaking of his appointment to the apostleship for the purpose of promoting obedience to the faith among all nations, he immediately subjoins: "among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ." They were in this very way, through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, effectually reached by the voice of mercy, and induced to yield obedience to the faith as it is in Christ. To the Galatians the same apostle hesitates not to declare that he himself, when he came in his apostolic office to preach the Gospel among them and was received by them as an angel of God, even as Jesus Christ, that he himself called them into the grace of Christ. And still more explicitly, while speaking to the Thessalonians of their salvation through sanctification of spirit and belief of truth, he says: Whereunto" unto which holy temper and cordial faith, "whereunto he called you by our Gospel." The truth is before us in noon-light clearness that the Holy Spirit employs the Gospel as his means of calling men to repentance and faith.

Yet some are disposed to say, in face of all this testimony, that there is another work of the Holy Spirit entirely different from his calling men to repentance, faith and holiness—the work of regeneration; that this work is done first by the Spirit alone, without the Gospel, in order that there may be something within man which the call of the Gospel may afterwards reach. But this is mere human invention and philosophy; it is not the testimony of God. Whether regeneration is a distinct thing from effectual calling or not—though I hold it to be clear as evidence can render it that they are but different modes of describing precisely the same thing—yet it is clear that the Spirit effects regeneration itself by means of the Gospel. The very change itself, whatever it is, is wrought by the Gospel in the hands of the Spirit, and applied by his power. For proof I rest on the following declarations. James says, in his general circular to all Christians: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." Peter says of all Christians, "Being born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the Word of God;" and he adds: "this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." And Paul, referring to the Gospel as the means of regeneration, scruples not at all in addressing the Corinthians to say of himself: "In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel." Whatever regeneration is, these declarations show beyond all dispute that it is effected by means of the Word of God. But since the Spirit of God produces the change, these testimonies of Scripture show that he employs the

word of truth as the means. The fact is that without any mystery on this subject, effectual calling to repentance and faith is a literal representation of the kind of change which the Spirit effects in man by applying the Gospel to his conscience and heart; and that begetting again and being born anew is a figurative description of the very same thing. And the former literal view is the only one given by the Westminster Divines in their admirable compend of doctrine under the head of "effectual calling;" nor was it till a later age that divines, seizing on the figures employed to represent the greatness of the spiritual change wrought in the heart of believers, threw every thing into the figures of begetting the soul again, its being born again, neglecting, at the same time, the equally expressive symbols of its being recreated and its being raised from the dead.

Now with this great fact before us that the Spirit employs the Gospel of Christ as the means of leading men to faith and repentance, I would simply ask whether he does not employ a wise and suitable means; whether he does not employ a means adapted in its very nature to secure the end—a means which is powerful in his hand to touch the conscience and heart of man and lead him to repentance? If not, then the end is not accomplished by the means at all; and you must maintain, in opposition to all the Scriptural testimony which has been alleged, that the Spirit produces it alone, by simple physical power, without the Gospel. But God says he does it by "the word of truth." He approaches, reaches, touches, sways, changes the mind through that medium of truth—the Gospel. And therefore it remains indisputable that the Gospel, itself, which the Spirit employs, is a system of truth adapted to secure repentance and faith.

For further evidence of this I would call your attention again to the very nature of the Gospel. It is a system of truth which, as Paul declares to the Romans, is the power of God to salvation. It embodies all the moral influences of the deity on the side of the recovery of man from sin to faith and reconciliation. Here God in all the united glories of his benevolence, holiness, righteousness, grace, God testifying to his wondrous doings for man in the orderings of his holy government, the beneficence of his providence, and the sacrifice of his beloved Son, God uttering threatenings and promises of what he will do in a coming eternity; here God himself distinctly calls on man to give up his rebellions and sins and follies, to turn to him with all the heart, to submit himself to his disposal and be cordially reconciled to his character and government, and have eternal peace and joy in his friendship and love. And is not this course of procedure adapted to reach his erring creature, and bring him back in penitence to the joys of his favor

and kingdom? Why this is the very way—and the only way—for one intelligent being ever to influence the heart of another and bring him to a change of feeling and purpose, by addressing considerations intelligently to his understanding and affectionately to his heart, as God does with man through the Gospel. And the considerations embodied in the Gospel are the strongest in kind which the mind of God can present or the heart of God can urge, to influence and persuade men to repent and return to him with cordial faith and reconciliation. Here hell is made bare and laid open to rouse the fears of man and deter him from continued rebellion; and heaven is presented in its immortal glory and blessedness to excite his desires and invite his return to God. Here condemnation and wrath and the penalty of a governing God speak to his conscience to oppress him with the evil of sin; and the blood of Christ proclaims for all the contrite the peace of free and full forgiveness. Here the idols on which the sinner has set his heart are exhibited in their vanity, and Jehovah, in his overflowing fullness, that he may be induced to forsake the inferior and take the supreme good as his portion and joy. And how were it possible for God to inspire in man that fear of his name, that ingenuous sorrow for sin, that trust in the Saviour, and devotedness to his glory and kingdom which exist in his children, if these considerations which he urges in the Gospel were not competent to do it? Certain it is that all who are made his willing subjects and are drawn of the Father to cordial submission and faith in his Son are, in fact, moved to it by the very considerations which the Gospel urges. They are persuaded by the terrors of the Lord. They are constrained by the love of Christ. They escape from the servitude of sin and become the servants of God, like the Romans, by obeying from the heart the form of doctrine delivered unto them through the Gospel. They purify their souls, like the Christians of the twelve tribes to whom Peter wrote, by obeying the truth. They renounce the love of the world as the odious idolatry which is enmity against the Father, and with their whole hearts choose the friendship of God as their portion and his benevolent service as their joyful employment just as he proposes it to them, and urges it upon their acceptance through the Gospel. Is not the Gospel then a suitable and proper means, adapted in its very nature to call sinners to repentance and reconciliation with God?

But methinks I hear some one suggest that men naturally hate the light, and are at enmity with God; and that the Gospel, so far from being adapted to lead them to repentance is fitted precisely for the very contrary to inflame their hatred, to increase their enmity, to harden their hearts, to destroy their souls. But why

reason so perversely from your premises? Why reason so blasphemously against God? It is the dictate of conscience, it is the declaration of God himself, that men harden their hearts and destroy their souls in no other way than by refusing to hearken to the voice of the Son of God. They must turn away their attention from the Gospel as much as possible, and when it is urged by others on their attention they must resist and brace themselves up against its power in order to hold out in rebellion, for the very reason that it is so powerfully bent on humbling and subduing them to repentance. They will not come to the light for the very reason that they fear to bring on their souls the power of its convicting, humbling, subduing reproofs. They are at enmity with God solely because they cannot bear to have him denounce that very curse and condemnation against their idolatry which is most powerfully adapted to bring them to a self-condemning renunciation of their idols. And for these very reasons which you would urge to show that the Gospel has no power to beget repentance in man, I should on the other hand affirm it to be utterly impossible to reach their hearts and subdue them to cordial repentance in any other way. These are the very means which need to be brought into contact with their consciences and hearts. And if they will not lay the Gospel in its power on their own souls this but shows the need of others doing it, if ever they are to be saved. This but shows the need of the Holy Spirit himself taking the truth which is dispensed in their hearing and carrying it home to their consciences and hearts in spite of all their ungrateful resistance if ever they are to be saved, and of his applying it there till they are overcome in their resistance and stubbornness; till they are reproved and humbled in the dust for their guilt; till they cordially join with God in his sentence upon them for their idolatry, and, with this subdued and humbled spirit, accept the peace, the forgiveness, the salvation which God so freely proffers.

With this view of the power of the Gospel as a means adapted to beget the cordial repentance and faith of mankind, laid before you, I remark, still further, that there is a mode of preaching the Gospel which is better fitted than others to bring its power upon the minds of hearers. This observation is so apparent that it scarcely needs any illustration. For as the truths of revelation have one grand design in their bearing on man and are employed by the Holy Spirit himself to subserve that very design, there must be a manner of dispensing those truths in public preaching which best accords with that design, in which ministers, as auxiliaries and helpers in the work of salvation, will be in the happiest manner workers together with God. You all know, for instance, that it better accords with the design of the Gospel for a preacher to speak

with that earnestness which will gain attention rather than with that listnessness which will not secure an outward hearing; better to be plain and intelligible than to be indistinct and confused in thoughts; better to be convincing in his reasonings with sound speech that can not be condemned, than to rely on inconclusive arguments which adversaries and gainsayers may easily resist; better to lay the truth home on the consciences and hearts of hearers as a thing of infinite moment to their souls than to present it as an abstract system of truth for their idle speculation; better to present it as a thing of immediate urgency and calling for the instant decision of the heart rather than a thing merely for after consideration at some future day; better, in short, to fall in so fully with the design of the Holy Ghost as that the hand of the Lord shall be visibly with them, and a great number believe and turn unto the Lord, rather than by any departures from his will to hinder his work and provoke him to leave them without his co-operation in their labors.

If then there is a way of preaching the Gospel so as best to bring its power upon the hearts of hearers, and the Gospel itself is adapted to secure faith and repentance; then we see that, in full accordance with the testimony of Luke, there is a way of preaching it adapted to beget faith in hearers. What that way is, is the important inquiry which remains to be considered.

I proceed therefore as was proposed.

II. To point out some of the things which are essential to such a mode of preaching the Gospel.

I would remark that to secure a manner of preaching the Gospel adapted to success, it seems essential.

1. That it should be preached with a heart deeply intent on the very design* of securing the cordial faith and obedience of hearers. According to the testimony of Paul, the preaching of Jesus Christ is now made known, by the commandment of the everlasting God, to all nations for the obedience of faith. To call sinners to repentance and faith, is the very work which God has put into the hands of the ministers of his Gospel. This is the very privilege the Almighty confers upon them in their sacred office. And to my mind nothing appears more presumptuous than to venture upon preaching the Gospel to sinful men without any hearty design to secure their cordial faith and obedience. Besides, is there any doubt that Paul and Barnabas, on the day when they went into the synagogue at Iconium, really intended to secure cordial faith in their hearers, and preached

* NOTE.—I mean that our preaching should proceed from the point of personal faith in the Saviour and fellowship with him in his cause, with a heart deeply intent on co-operating with him in the design of securing through the Gospel the cordial faith and obedience of hearers.

with their hearts fully set on this very object? And would you charge them, in this, with grossly perverting their office? or would you not rather commend them for their faithfulness and their hearty accordance with the will of God?

Besides, in what other way can success be rationally expected in the ministrations of the Gospel? In any other employment surely, you would say that the one who engages his whole heart in the design of securing the object, would, other things equal, be the more likely to command success. And why shall not this general law of providence hold in regard to the preaching of the Gospel? Does success depend here on the Holy Spirit applying the truth to the conscience and heart? Then surely, he who preaches with the hearty design of promoting the work of repentance and salvation, will only be so much the more solicitous to secure the hand of the Lord and the presence of the Holy Spirit with him in his ministrations. The very object on which his heart is set will cause him to be more importunate in prayer and more watchful in duty, that the God of Israel may go with him and cause the arrows of truth to be sharp in the hearts of his enemies. Or does success depend at all on presenting the full power of the Gospel to men that the Holy Spirit may wield it as his conquering sword? But who shall ever exhibit the power of Gospel truth, if it be not he who enters with his whole heart into the very design of the Gospel and seeks to promote its saving triumphs among men. But without such a design at heart no one will ever fully present the Gospel in its true light. Cicero has justly remarked that if the feelings with which you represent a fact and the fact itself do not accord, you have not in reality presented the truth, but have misrepresented it to the minds of your hearers. Just so here. Unless you carry the feeling into an audience and pervade them with the feeling that you are presenting to them a message from God of endless concern to their souls, you misrepresent the Gospel. And it is with a heart deeply intent on the very design of securing the repentance and salvation of them that hear you, that you are to expect, if ever, to pervade an audience with that absorbing feeling and present the Gospel before their minds in that only light of truth as a message from God of endless moment to their souls. You will then, if ever, be conscious yourself, and make them conscious that you are speaking for God; that you are standing before them in the stead of Christ and pleading in his behalf; that the Lord through you is speaking to them; that he pleads with them respecting their own conduct; that he is present with the word calling them to repentance; that he beseeches them by [redacted] horrid ingratitude and vileness of sin, by all the terrors of [redacted] wrath, by all the agonies endured for their forgiveness on [redacted] by all the love and compassion of his heart, by all the in-

terests of eternity, by all the worth of their own souls, to be reconciled at once and submissive to his government, and accept with all the heart his offered salvation. Thus will the weighty realities of the Gospel, if ever, be brought into immediate contact with every feeling of their souls. Thus will the Gospel come to them not in word only but in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. Thus will they, if ever, be in circumstances to receive the Gospel not as the word of man but as it is in truth, the word of God which worketh effectually in them that believe.

I would remark, that in order to secure a manner of preaching the Gospel adapted to success, it seems essential.

2. That it should be preached as a system of consistent truths, bearing with one harmonious design on the great object of repentance and salvation.

God has but one grand object on which his heart is set in the publication of the Gospel, and that is, the accomplishment of redemption, to call men to the obedience of the faith and to salvation. He has not two counter, adverse, and warring designs running through that book, as some, either directly or indirectly, misrepresent its contents. It can not be said with any truth, nor without dishonor to God, that such a part of revelation was intended to excite faith and such a part to hinder it; such a part to promote repentance and such a part to prevent it; this part to secure filial prayer and obedience and that to secure contempt and sin; this to subdue the heart and that to harden it; this to save and that to destroy souls. Though the Gospel may receive this opposite and diverse treatment from men and be attended with different consequences on account of their treatment of it, yet the Gospel itself has but one consistent, holy, salutary bearing upon this guilty world. God published it for the one object of promoting repentance and salvation. And though Paul found, in preaching Jesus Christ, that the sweet savor of his name was life to them that were saved and death to them that perished; yet the commission he received from God and the object on which his heart was set, was one, to "open the eyes of the ignorant Gentiles and to turn them from the power of Satan unto God that they might receive forgiveness and inheritance among the sanctified through faith in Christ." And if while engaged with all his heart in this one object of benevolence, any to whom he preached refused the message of heavenly grace, the savor of Christ was fragrant still notwithstanding their perversion and ruin, fragrant even in the execution of final justice.

Now, if a preacher of the Gospel would hope to bring its salutary power on the hearts of men, he should enter into the design of God in this very respect, and set forth the various doctrines and precepts of the Gospel as one harmonious system, having in all its parts one

salutary and practical bearing on man. The harmony of which I speak is the agreement of the truths of the Scriptures in their practical bearing; the harmony not only of the doctrines with one another but of the doctrines with the precepts. It is obvious that a system of doctrinal representation agreeing with itself in its various parts might be made out, and yet the various parts in themselves be erroneous and aside from the practical intent of the Gospel; for it is as easy to construct error into a system as truth. But I refer to that system and harmony which exists in doctrines; their agreeing with each other not merely in abstract speculation, but above all, in this respect that they all have one practical tendency, lending their united power to the one object of promoting faith and salvation. He who brings out the doctrines of the Gospel in this harmony, will find the whole scope and range of Gospel truths bearing directly on the design of his heart to lead men to salvation. One will be sustained in its practical bearing with the whole force of all the others. And if there is any way of making bare the sword of the Spirit and presenting it to the heart in all its sharpness, if there is any way of presenting the full power of the Gospel before the minds of hearers, this is the way. All the truths of the Gospel will thus be coincident with its grand precepts. All will be guides, helps, motives in favor of compliance, none of them hindrances.

For example: The duty of sinners to repent and their dependence on grace should not be set forth at practical variance but in practical harmony. Their perfect qualifications as creatures for obedience or disobedience being admitted as the foundation of their duties and their being addressed by the commands of God, their dependence on grace should be resolved, consequently, not into their want of such constitutional qualities but into their own refusal to do the duties for which they are qualified, and their own unwillingness at heart, when left to themselves, to comply with the reasonable demands of God. In this way you make it out that it is they themselves who are to turn and repent, if ever their salvation is effected; and at the same time you throw them as guilty beings on the grace of the Holy Spirit who is striving with them through the Gospel, who is ready, if they yield, to lead them forward to heaven as adopted sons, or who may, even if they refuse this once to hear the voice of Christ, abandon them to their own stubbornness and perdition. Thus the preceptive will and the purposes of God should be set forth as alike favoring the cause of holiness in his wide moral creation and not at practical variance. When his law and government are justly set forth as expressing his real will and preference as to what he would have his rational creatures do on their part, his purposes should be represented as his will and preference as to what he should do himself most wisely and successfully to promote the very same object among his creatures. The destinction between the being of God and the being of

his creatures, and his conduct and their conduct, should be kept clearly in sight. For it is perfectly consistent that he should express his will by precept as to what he prefers they should do, and that he should purpose to do on his part the utmost possible, consistent with wisdom, to promote this very object of holiness in his moral creation. For, if notwithstanding the expression of his will, some of his creatures will sin, and many of the guilty, when called to repentance. will persevere in sin, God himself evidently has but one heart, wholly bent on the interests of holiness and happiness in his kingdom, and wholly bent against sin and misery. He has not two hearts—preferring with a whole heart repentance and holiness here, and preferring with a whole heart impenitence and sin there; he goes forward with one undivided heart of benevolence, performing his own works in favor of holiness and salvation; welcoming to that heart all who return and seek his grace as beloved children of his adoption and casting off all who refuse, as reprobates, to perish in their sins; thus making manifest the glory of his benevolence towards his kingdom alike in lessons of grace and in lessons of justice.

So, if the minister of the Gospel present the threatenings of the Lord, he must not represent them as a proclamation of wrath from which there is no escape, but of wrath which must come upon sinners if they persevere in sin, and thus, as solemn warnings to flee from coming wrath, be made to harmonize with the invitations and promises which God holds out on the other hand to allure to his friendship and guidance. So wrath itself should be presented in its true source as enkindled solely by sin, as brought upon the soul by its refusing offered grace, and, in its terrors, as a cloud of darkness, reigning down fire and a horrible tempest upon the finally lost, in order to induce the sinner to step back from the precipice and flee for refuge; and mercy, on the other hand, in perfect harmony, should be represented as exercised only to the penitent, as accepting freely all who yield to its calls, and as seated in the person of Christ on its home and throne in the heavens, taking with all joy to its protection every heart-broken sinner who comes fleeing to it from sin and wrath and destruction.

Who cannot see and feel that to set forth the Gospel as harmonizing in all its parts upon one practical bearing is best adapted to secure success? How is it possible to gain the credit and assent of the unbelieving to a word if it is set forth as contradictory in its parts? How secure sorrow for sin if sin is set forth in the same breath as a thing odious above all things to the heart of God, and yet as a thing he prefers to holiness? How can repentance be secured if after calling upon the sinner himself to repent, you turn round the very next moment and say that it is no work of his, and he must wait for the Holy Spirit to perform the whole

work? How can confidence in God be possibly secured by representing him as having two opposing wills and two hearts at war with one another?

It is indeed true that the Holy Spirit may make use of the little truth mixed with error that may come out of such representations of the Gospel, and convert men in spite of the error; but then it is just as true that all such error is itself a hindrance to the work of grace, and is but a clog in the way of all success.

I would remark, that in order to secure a manner of preaching the Gospel adapted to success, it seems essential.

3. That it should be preached in a way of application to the hearers so as to call for the decision of their hearts at the time.

God designs in the Gospel to address to all classes of men a message in favor of their spiritual welfare, and to call upon them for the immediate resolves of the heart to close in with the truth as it applies to their own case, and yield obedience to it in love. And ministers of the Gospel will best favor the object of repentance and salvation among men by falling in with this design of God and attempting to carry it out into execution in their labors with their people. At least, I know of no classes who are not met by a message of mercy in the Gospel calling upon them for their instant decision, unless it is those who have committed the unpardonable sin, or whom God, for their former despite of his grace, has utterly abandoned of his Spirit and left without restraint to their wickedness and perdition. But the minister of Christ is never to decide that any are of these classes and to reject them from his ministry; and if any under his ministry think themselves to belong to either of these classes, he is only to apply the marks of each class so distinctly as that none, though the temptations of Satan, or their own wilfulness and reluctance to duty, shall place themselves behind a delusion of this sort; so as to tear away the shelter of such an excuse from such as desire to escape from the duty of repentance and holiness, and leave all but the really unpardonable and the really abandoned still open to the calls of the Gospel.

Now since the Gospel has this wide and varied application, the preacher will surely best adapt his manner for success, other things equal, by taking from the store-house of the Gospel those particular themes which have the best practical application to his people, and make out a practical case for them to decide at the time, which he should argue and enforce and drive to the very point of a decision, and so, if possible, as to succeed in gaining a favorable decision—one which shall be for their own highest interests for the advancement of religion and the glory of the Savior. But whatever may be his particular theme, if taken out of the

Gospel, it will have some practical bearing on some one or more classes of his hearers; and here it is his strength to find out the practical question which the theme presents to each class, and to urge home that question for a decision at the time. I do not say that this should be done in one unvarying mode. I do not pretend that it would be for the furtherance of the Gospel among all classes, if such an application in a sermon were followed by a distinct call made upon the audience at the time to rise, or to signify in any other manner whether they have decided the question favourably to themselves. But I do say that if he would preach the Gospel in its real power and with the hope of success, he should present the question of duty which arises from his theme, or which is enforced by it, distinctly to the class of hearers who are immediately concerned; that he should urge it upon them for their decision at once; that he should strive to put down all their adverse pleas, and take away from them all their excuses, and drive them out of all their refuges and shelters and strongholds, and bring them willingly to fall down before the triumphant power of the Gospel in submission, and lead them as willing captives to the mercy-seat of Jesus Christ. For where and when may he expect success if not here in the sanctuary of God, before the majesty of his holiness, while pointing out the courses of the sinner and the saint and their end in eternity? Here, at the gate of heaven, while, in the name of Jesus Christ, he comes down to their very case with a message of mercy, while he pleads with them with all the persuasive considerations of the Gospel, while saints and angels, and God, all heaven and all hell are waiting in breathless silence for their decision, to see whether they will hearken to the voice of the Son of God and live, or go on, as they have done, refusing his grace and forcing their way to endless ruin. Paul and Barnabas so preached in the synagogue at Iconium, and a great multitude cordially believed at the very time, and are now in their crown of glory in the heavenly world. And so should all the ministers of Jesus Christ preach his word. And if they are not successful at one time, they should still go forward, disheartened not; for if there is any method of speaking in which they can ever hope to be successful, any way in which they can ever hope to win souls to Christ and salvation, this surely is the method; this is the way.

I have thus attempted to show you that there is a manner of preaching the Gospel which is adapted to secure success, and have pointed out some of the things in which that manner of preaching essentially consists.

From this subject, I remark, in the first place, that the dependence of preachers of the Gospel on the co-operating power of the

Holy Spirit to give success to their labours, is of all reasons the weightiest why they should speak in a manner adapted to beget repentance and faith in hearers. For in this method they enter cordially into the work of the Lord and make ready his way to enter into the hearts of men with the victories of his truth; and should they not prepare the Lord his way?

But some one perhaps will tell me it is theirs alone to preach the truth, God's alone to give results.

They are to preach the truth indeed; but how? in what manner? They might preach truth, if they spoke only on agriculture and manufactures; would that be faithful? Or if you confine them to the Scriptures, they might preach truth if they kept speaking continually on the subject of the resurrection; would that be faithful? Or if you say they must preach the whole truth of the Gospel, how can they preach the whole truth and present it to their people in its real practical power, I ask, if they do not enter into the feelings of Christ and into communion with the Holy Spirit in respect to the particular themes of the Gospel on which they speak, if they care not whether the truth shall gain its victories over the minds of any, if they are not careful to present it as harmonious in the practical bearings of its parts rather than as clogged with hurtful discordances, if they are not careful to make out its practical applications and call by the weight of its consideration for the decision of the heart?

But, it is said, duties are ours, results are God's. The maxim is doubtless true in various applications. I must confess Christ and go forward in all my duties let me receive what treatment I may from my fellow-men, trusting providence for all results to myself. But suppose you are in an office in the faithful discharge of which it is one of your duties to seek after-results and labor to obtain good results? Can you in faithfulness dismiss all care about results? Such is the office of the minister of Christ. One of his greatest duties is to win souls to Christ and to convert the erring from their sins. At this very result he is to aim and for it he is to labor, and pray the Holy Ghost to be with him that he may obtain it; and if it is not gained at one time, he is not to leave and forsake it as hopeless, but to seek for it at another time, and go on thus through life seeking the triumphs of the Gospel among the guilty and lost.

But do you hold that success in the ministry is a test of faithfulness? Not that exactly. All I do say is, that *other things equal*, he who preaches in a manner best adapted for success will on the whole have the most success. Yet ministers of the Gospel have not all the responsibility in the case put upon their shoulders. The Church have theirs. Each impenitent sinner has his. If a

sinner should commit the unpardonable sin, he cuts himself off by that very act from the Holy Spirit using the ministrations of any man for his salvation. If a church will not come up to the work of the Lord they may present an obstacle that will hinder the Spirit of grace from rendering the best ministrations of the Gospel subservient to their spiritual edification and growth in grace, or from carrying them with convincing and converting power into the hearts of sinners. All which I assert is, that so far as the preaching of the Gospel is itself concerned, the faithful application of it has the greatest tendency to success, and is most acceptable to the Holy Spirit as the means to be applied by his powerful grace. Yet the tendency may be so counteracted as not to be crowned by the Spirit with actual success. Paul and Barnabus who so spake when at Iconium as to gain many converts to Christ, had been so opposed by the envy and prejudices of the unbelieving Jews of Antioch the very Sabbath before as to shake off the dust of their feet in testimony against them and lay to their charge the hindrance of the Gospel. "Ye put the word of God from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life. Lo! we," and the Spirit who employs us, "turn away to the Gentiles."

From the subject, I remark in the next place, we may learn what are some of the important qualifications for a skillful and successful handling of the Word of life.

In order to preach the Gospel in the manner which has been specified, in addition to an irreproachable life and conversation, and the natural qualities of a sound judgment and good common sense, the qualifications which enter most deeply into the work as the very ingredients of success are, ardent piety, a thorough knowledge of theology, and an intimate acquaintance with the workings of the human heart, especially in matters of spiritual concern.

Ardent piety is that qualification which alone will lead the minister of Christ, with a full and hearty fellowship of feeling with the Savior who died for sinners, to seek in his ministrations the object of the salvation of men through his blood. Knowing the persuasive terrors of a God of holiness and judgment, and the love, passing comprehension, of Jesus the Redeemer, he is constrained to crucify the world to his affections, to hide its pride, and ambition and covetousness from his heart, and with singleness of spirit to seek the advancement of the excellent knowledge of Christ among men, and to gather the souls of the lost and erring into the fold of salvation.

A thorough knowledge of theology is especially necessary to the minister of Jesus Christ that he may go freely into the wide field of subjects embraced in the Gospel and make the whole, as

a system in intellectual and moral harmony, emanating from one God and directed to one great end, bear directly on the spiritual interests of his hearers.

And when the minister of Jesus Christ comes to apply his themes to various distinct classes among his hearers, either in public discourse or in private and personal conference, it is an intimate acquaintance with the various workings of the heart in spiritual concerns that is to furnish him with a knowledge of the various doubts, and difficulties, and evasions, and excuses which hinder personal religion, and with the most apt reasonings and persuasions for gaining the heart fully to Christ.

These qualifications, so important to success, are not necessarily low or stationary. The minister of Christ may place his standard high and be constantly growing in these qualifications, if watchful, and diligent, and prayerful. That the Spirit of grace, and wisdom, and power may ever rest upon the watchmen of Zion, brethren, it is yours, as having an interest and responsibility in the same cause, ever to encourage them by your assistance, ever to seek help for them in your prayers.

From this subject I remark, in the last place, we learn the way of rendering the office of the ministry a blessed privilege to him who sustains it and to them who receive its labors.

If the minister of Christ will enter with all his heart into the work of the Lord, and present the instructions and calls of the Gospel in all their power to the hearts of his fellow Christians and fellow sinners; and if they, on their part, will receive the Word as the Word of God which worketh effectually in them that believe, the sweet and fragrant name of Christ shall fill our sanctuaries with the tears of penitence, the joys of forgiveness, the songs of salvation.

Go back to the scene in the synagogue at Iconium when Paul and Barnabus so spake that a great multitude of the Jews and Greeks believed. Did not a thrill of benevolent joy come over the hearts of those Apostles that day when they were honored by their Lord with success in his work? And did not many erring souls date that day their birth into the holy and happy kingdom of God? What joy began in that synagogue! How has it been enlarging and increasing ever since! And when shall that time in eternity ever come in which Paul and Barnabas, and those redeemed from Iconium shall not thank the Savior for the blessed privilege of the Word of God spoken and heard that day?

Well: these same scenes may be enacted now. The same Jesus is on the throne; the same Gospel is in the World; the same Spirit wields it as his conquering sword. And ministers now, as they did then, may meet their fellow-men, dispensing to them the Gospel of salvation with their hearts bent on success; and hearers now can, as

they did then, hearken to the voice of Jesus Christ, and turn and live. These were not the miracles of the apostolic age; they were the common triumphs of the Spirit and Gospel of Christ, which are yet to fill the earth with greater victories than all Pentecostal and apostolic triumphs. This, then, is the very way, and the only way, to render that gift of the ministry of his Word which on his ascension he left here among the rebellious, a source of joy and blessedness to him that takes it and to them that hear its dispensations.

And should it not be enough to know that there is a clear and plain way in which the preached Gospel may become the means of your redemption? Seeing that the Gospel proclaims a heavenly rest which the returning sinner may seek, and as that promise is left among us here, cling to it as your life. Give up the world and sin, and lay all your hopes for strength on that promise. Fear lest any of you should seem to come short of it. For this same Gospel was preached in other ages as well as now. And while some have believed the good tidings, and living in the joy and obedience of the faith have entered into their eternal rest, multitudes, wherever it has been preached, have refused to believe. The Word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith. They could not enter into rest because of unbelief. They refused, though the Holy Spirit said to-day if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts. They have gone down to their graves, poor outcast sinners and wanderers from mercy. God has uttered over them his irrevocable oath, and sworn in his wrath they shall not enter into my rest. They have passed away into the world of perdition never to return. And now from the oath of God, from their graves, from their bed of torment in hell, comes up to your ears the voice of despairing agony and warning that you hearken to the calls of Christ and live.

SERMON XIII.*

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CHRIST THE ONLY SURE FOUNDATION.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. 3: 11.

The word foundation properly signifies the base of an edifice. It is the groundwork on which the building stands; the underlay of brick or stone on which the whole superstructure rests securely. It is commonly laid in solid masonry of imperishable materials, and hence the term instantly raises the idea of permanence, stability, and strength.

Every building must have a good foundation, or the whole structure is in danger. A temple built upon a crumbling, unsolid basis, would constantly be liable to be overthrown. However massive its columns or graceful its spires; however costly its materials or imposing its architecture; however beautiful its proportions or ornamental its finish, unless the ground-work has been laid deep and strong, it might, the very next hour, become a heap of ruins. The settling of a corner-stone; the undermining rains; the heaving frost, or the yielding earth, might, in a moment, change the fair and costly fabric into a picture of desolation.

All mankind are builders, some of one thing and some of another. The ministers of God are building up his Church. Good men are building up society. Sabbath-school teachers are building up the principles of the young. And all men are building up characters for time, and hopes and characters for eternity; some upon vague theory; some upon the sands of human reason; some upon their boasted morality; some upon smooth, delusive doctrines that only beguile to ruin, and some upon the crumbling principles of infidelity and atheism.

These shall all be shaken as by an earthquake in the last great day of trial. Such refuges of lies shall be swept away like chaff before the storm, or sand in the mountain torrent, leaving no sure standing-place for those who trusted in them.

But, thanks be to God, there is a foundation on which we may build and feel secure; a Rock which no disturbing elements can move, no changes or commotions can effect, no rain of sin can undermine, no earthquake shock can ever shake in pieces. That Rock is Christ. He is the "Rock of Ages," on which his Church is built; He is the foundation of all the hopes and comfort of his people. He is the only ground of pardon and salvation to sinful men. He is the only sure resting-place for all believers.

* Note—The true number of discourses published in the National Preacher from its commencement (907) to this date, is placed upon the title-page of this number. A double index, general and topical, has been published for convenient reference, filling some thirty-four pages in all. —[Editor National Preacher.]

The figure presented in the text is one which Paul borrowed from architecture, and by a striking metaphor which he often used calls the Church God's building, and Christ the foundation on which it stands. And the meaning plainly is, that no true Church can be reared which does not embrace and hold the essential doctrines respecting him; those which pertain to his incarnation, his divine nature, his instruction, his example, his atonement, his resurrection and ascension; that it is by him only that men can be saved, and where he is wanting in his true character all is wanting. Without him for a foundation all is unsatisfactory, uncertain, and deceptive as the "baseless fabric of a vision." Living without him for a Savior is living as if he had never died, and dying without him to rest upon is taking the infidel's "leap in the dark!" We are driven away from all mere human creeds, and vain theories, and speculations, and false philosophy to this only Rock of strength and security that shall never be overthrown. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

I. There can be no other foundation so *precious* and *costly*.

It is an expensive piece of work, infinitely beyond the power of man. How vain and puerile do the efforts of the creature appear in anything when compared with those of his Creator; much more in a work like this.

When man attempts to devise means for his own atonement, as he sometimes does, how utterly worthless and despicable are his most costly sacrifices; his good works all defiled with selfishness and sin; his merits are those of a condemned criminal; his gold and silver are base metal, and all the precious things he can heap together do not belong to him but to his Maker. He is a bankrupt seeking to concel an infinite debt, yet poor as Lazarus he has nothing to pay. Who then would trust his soul on such a foundation? The first blaze of Sinai's lightning would destroy it. and the first roll of Sinai's thunder would melt his heart within him.!

But no terrors of the law will ever reach the poor sinner who rests his soul on Christ and his atonement. Jesus has paid his debt for him, and laid a firm foundation for pardon in his own most precious blood. Here is a ground of hope and a Rock of deliverance, compared with which all that man can do would be unstable as the drifting sand or the floating vapours of the morning.

All human substitutions sink into utter insignificance and worthlessness when compared with this costly sacrifice of Christ. It is not formed of those rare and gorgeous materials which John saw laid in the walls of the New Jerusalem! It cannot be compared with diamonds. The rarest jewels are of no account. Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it to be found among the treasures of earth. It cannot be valued with the precious Onyx or the Sapphire. The Topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with the gold of Ophir.

Let the monarchs of the world unite their treasures of gold and silver, and impoverish their kingdoms to make one vast offering, how utterly inadequate would it be to purchase salvation for one of the meanest of their subjects, or procure the pardon of a single sin!

Herodotus relates a story of one of the Lydian princes who made a most costly offering to the temple of Delphi. This offering embraced a vast number of couches decked with gold and silver, goblets of gold, vestments of purple, and precious things to an incredible amount. All these were consumed together in one immense sacrificial pile to propitiate a heathen deity. And the melted gold ran down in such a stream that a massive lion was cast from the precious metal.

And what did all this do for the poor deluded king? Did it purchase salvation for him? Did it bring peace of conscience? Did it cheer him with any bright hope of heaven? Did it move his deity to compassion? Did it avail anything at all with that dumb idol? No more would it have availed anything if he had offered it to God as a sacrifice for sin!

There is nothing but the precious blood of Christ which flowed down on Calvary that can atone for sin. A sacrifice of all the material wealth of the universe would avail nothing. The death of all the angels as a sacrifice for an atonement would avail nothing. The only begotten Son of God is the priceless sacrifice that can avail. His infinite merits, his mysterious sufferings and death alone constitute a foundation where believers may build their hopes, and chant their praises, and renew their graces, and rest with unshaken confidence in their great Redeemer.

The figure presented in the text as applied to Christ is elsewhere employed in the Scriptures with peculiar emphasis and beauty. Seven hundred years before the incarnation, Isaiah wrote of him in the language of inspiration: "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." Perhaps no other figure could have been more striking to Oriental minds, accustomed as they were to magnificent temples in which the "corner-stone" was held in high esteem. In all the ancient public buildings great importance was attached to it, and no temple was complete without it. It was carved with great skill in costly marble, and laid with imposing ceremony in the most conspicuous and honorable position. Hence the beauty of the figure, shadowing forth the relation which Christ sustains to his Church, the dignity of his office, and the superior excellence of his person.

In Paul's epistle to the Ephesians we find the same imagery employed to express the relation of Christ to his people: "Built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit."

The allusion here is obviously to the temple of Diana at Ephesus,

and the contrast is between that sumptuous pile and the Christian churches, the temple of God.

But the Ephesian converts were made to learn something from this heathen structure. They learned to build their hopes, not upon a foundation of wooden piles driven into the earth, like the temple of Diana, but upon that solid and costly basis which Christ has laid, and on which shall be reared a spiritual temple that shall outshine and outlast the starry firmament itself in its sublimity, and grandeur, and resplendent glory!

II. There can be no other foundation so wonderful in its *original conception.*

A philosopher once asked a man of God this question: "What is the most wonderful event in the history of our world?" He instantly replied: "The mediation of Christ between God and men." And is not it true? Did you ever hear of anything more marvellous? or can you imagine anything more transcendently surprising?

Many strange things there are that excite our wonder, but none to be compared with this. Creative power seems wonderful indeed. Annihilating power is equally so. But redeeming power far surpasses both. That God should create a world from nothing is a surprising fact. But that he should save condemned criminals from the sentence of his own most holy law is infinitely more surprising.

There is nothing among all the works of God so marvellous as his plan of mercy. What a conception is this; restoring to holiness a race of transgressors depraved, ruined, and, so far as the human mind could see, lost beyond possibility of recovery. The law says: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." All have sinned, and all must die. There is no alternative. The doom is enexorable. The sentence is unchangeable. Now whence shall come deliverance? What possible escape is there from the penalty. Who can bring salvation to apostate souls already under condemnation? But a plan of mercy was contrived and announced. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to die, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

There was nothing lovely in us to call forth the divine compassion. We were wicked, and vile, and at enmity with God. And to subdue us by his love, to restore us to his favour, and make us for ever happy in his love is truly God-like, sublime, and glorious beyond anything with which we can compare it!

And then the incarnation! How surprising is this also! Who but a God of infinite wisdom and goodness would have thought of vailing Deity in human flesh, assuming our nature, and becoming like one of us in all respects except sin; thus sending a personage of such dignity and exalted worth as to sustain the majesty of the law by dying in the sinner's stead?

And then what marvellous condescension is in it? That he who built the heavens and laid the foundation of the earth, should stoop so low as to make it possible for the vilest of his creatures to be pardoned, is a fact that ought to humble the proudest heart and subdue the most stubbor

And then the grandeur of the scheme of redemption. Is there anything that can equal its divinity? How glorious is the thought that the salvation of countless millions rests on this only ground of pardon which Christ has made by his death and sufferings on the cross.

And then how surprising its eternity; it looks forward through a boundless future; it looks back to the first transgression; it provides for all coming ages; it lays the foundation of faith and hope for all who shall ever believe in Christ. The first conception of this method of our salvation is surprising in every possible aspect in which we view it. There is no limit to the wonders that gather round it, and we shall never cease to wonder at its glories. It will fill the souls of the redeemed with eternal anthems of praise.

III. There can be no other foundation laid so *deep* and *broad*.

Man can lay deep and broad the foundations of towers and temples; but where would man place the first stone in a work like this? The tower of Babel doubtless had a base deep and broad, but it never reached to heaven. The Pyramids of Egypt extend deep into the ground and spread out so wide at the bottom that earthquakes have not been able to overturn them.

But who could arrange a scheme of pardon so deep as not to be overthrown by the slightest breath of divine justice? All the frail fabrics of man's devising are built in the sands; but this Rock of our salvation reaches far into the mysteries of eternal things. If you would find the depth of this foundation, you must fathom the attributes of God, whose judgments are a great deal past finding out.

It was laid deep in the divine wisdom and knowledge.

It was laid deep in the divine compassion, that pitied our wretched, undone condition, and the sight moved the sympathies and love of the Most High for his lost children of the human family.

It was laid deep in the divine goodness which leadeth men to repentance. The same goodness which causes the sun to shine and the rain to descend upon the evil and on the good, is visible in every part of this great plan of mercy and redemption.

It was laid deep in suffering. To measure this, you must be able to understand the agonies of Gethsemane, and the dying groans of Calvary, when all nature was filled with astonishment, and the heavens were draped in mourning; and the rending rocks and heaving earth gave signs of woe incomprehensible.

It was laid deep in the purposes of God. It was no uncertain design; no doubtful undertaking; for every word of the Lord shall be fulfilled. And when he determined upon a method of redemption, it was certain to be accomplished in the fullness of time.

And would you measure the breadth of this foundation? It is broad enough for all nations to build upon. Even the heathen shall find room here and the multitude of the isles that wait for God's law. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth," saith the *Lord. Isa. 4b: 22.*

It is broad enough to save all who believe. Repentance and faith in Christ are its only conditions. Some have supposed it broad enough to save all without any conditions. But while all are freely invited to Christ, and the gates of heaven stand wide open to all, the Bible has nowhere said that all will enter in; on the contrary it declares that multitudes will perish in their sins.

It is broad enough to save all men *from* their sins, but none *in* their sins. It was never designed for this. It was made only for the penitent and believing. It has no room for those whose hearts are unchanged and whose sins are unpardoned. It is broad enough to save the most wicked and vile who come to Jesus, even unto the uttermost.

IV. There can be no other foundation so *durable* and *firm*.

All the works of man are doomed to perish; and so, sooner or later, all his efforts to save himself will perish; but the work of Christ shall never fail. He is an eternal Saviour to all who believe in him.

Man can lay a foundation of stone to stand for long ages. The foundations of Luxor and Karnack, and the Meimnonium of Thebes, have stood thousands of years. Pyramid and Parthenon yet remain, and even some of the masonry of old Babylon, though long since crumbling to ruins.

But the foundation which Christ has laid shall endure for ever. And he who builds on him shall never be disappointed. There shall be no giving away of the Chief Corner-stone; no crumbling of his atonement; no weakening of the efficacy of his sufferings and death. The strength and power of the cross shall never fail. Here is security and safety for all the righteous. "The foundation of God standeth sure having this seal—The Lord knoweth them that are his." "Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."

"How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

This truth is confirmed by the experience of the saints in all ages. Abel looked at it through the dim future, and trusted in it. Prophets and holy men have built their faith upon it, and were not deceived. The martyrs have walked to the stake, and found it could stand the fires of persecution. Wicked men can not overthrow it. In vain do bold blasphemers dash themselves upon it. In vain do scoffers hurl their angry words against it. In vain did Roman rulers, and scribes, and pharisees, plot against it.

"He lives! the great Redeemer lives!
What joy the blest assurance gives."

Christ is a Rock which no storms of adversity can ever move, and which no disturbing elements can ever shake. He is a safe hiding-place from the great adversary. The roaring lion may go to and fro seeking to destroy, but never shall he place his foot upon this strong defence, or hurt a soul who has taken refuge in it.

Here is security from the terrors of the law. Justice stands with a drawn sword, but can not slay the trusting believer here. S

blaze and thunder, but can not touch the penitent sinner here. Though the heavens be rolled together as a scroll, and pass away with a great noise; though the elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth itself be burned up, that foundation of Christ shall stand firm as his enduring throne.

V. There can be no other foundation so *glorious* in *design*.

The foundations of earthly structures are sometimes laid with lofty aims and purposes; to display magnificence; to exhibit human skill; to furnish noble specimens of architecture; to commemorate the deeds of fame, or gratify a nation's pride.

But no such aims and purposes pertain to Christ. He came to show mercy to the guilty; to bring salvation to the lost; to furnish a ground of pardon for all who should believe. He came to destroy Satan's kingdom, and repair the ruins of the fall. He came to make men holy and happy; to build up a spiritual temple, a glorious Church, to be called the Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven. It was for the joy that was set before him in the grandeur of the scheme that he endured the cross, despising the shame.

And then how certain was the accomplishment of his purpose. He has all the power to execute, all wisdom to control, all foreknowledge of the future, all the resources of the universe at his command.

And then the reward that is promised to him: "The heathen shall be given to him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession."

And then the progress of his kingdom, how steady and sublime; extending every where in silent power like leaven in the meal; reclaiming sinners, gaining over the enemies of the truth, melting down hard hearts, demolishing error, undermining oppression, enlightening the nations, subverting pagan superstitions, gaining a footing here and there on heathen shores, and by-and-by will recover the whole world to his own dominion.

And then the glorious triumph that shall follow: "The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord." Then will be sung the joyful anthem:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name."

Then shall that great temple composed of Christ's members, as living stones, being built up a spiritual house, be near to its completion, and the word of Zachariah shall be fulfilled: "He shall bring forth the head-stone with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it."

VI. But finally: There can be no other foundation so *sublime* in *effect*.

Most human systems of religion make men worse instead of better. They do not elevate, they depress. They could never fit a soul for heaven. Many of them are entirely congenial to fallen nature. All of them are better suited to the depraved appetites and passions, to the pride and selfishness of the natural heart, than to the promotion of holiness. Indeed, what could we expect from such a source but some*thing that would be pleasing* to a heart depraved. Emanating from a

wicked mind, we should expect that every human system would be approved and loved by a wicked heart; and so it is.

Why do the followers of Mahomet love the Koran? Because it promises them a sensual paradise without repentance. Why do the heathen cling so tenaciously to their idols? Because their religion is as low as their desires.

But the religion of Christ runs counter to all these. It elevates man from the poison-valley of sin to the pure atmosphere of God's Word which gives him life. There is no other religion that makes men better, as there is no other that demands a renovation from sin to holiness. There is no other that so approves itself to our reason and conscience. There is no other so wonderful in its power of reaching the most degraded and vile. It invites all, blesses all, saves all who are willing to be saved by Christ. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." The name of Jesus sounds sweet in a believer's ear, no matter whether he be among the poor and despised, or among the rich and honored. Christ has built no royal road to heaven. He has not laid one foundation for a palace and another for a hovel. The poorest publican may build on him; the proudest monarch can find no other Savior.

Here, then, we rest. Here is our confidence. Here is the Rock of our salvation. We can never expect that another Christ will come; we certainly should never desire to be saved by any other. There can be no other foundation so precious and costly; none so surprising in conception; none so deep and broad; none so durable and firm; none so glorious in design; none so sublime in effect; none so worthy of the wisdom, knowledge, and love of God; none so worthy the everlasting songs of angels, and of the redeemed among men.

And now, my hearer, if you reject Christ, what other way to heaven can you expect to find? Where else will you look for help? What other blood so precious? What other fountain can wash away sin? What other light can illumine the darkness of the tomb? Who else can be your advocate in the last great day?

Step off from this foundation, and you step into a bottomless abyss? Reject this "Rock of Ages," and you are in the great ocean of despair! Despise this "Ark of safety," and you are overwhelmed with the floods of endless woe, where there is no mountain-top to climb; no abatement of the waters; no dove to bring the olive-branch of hope! Christ is the only door of mercy to the guilty. He is the way, the truth, and the life. By him, if any man enter in, he shall never perish.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting.

No one who attends this daily prayer-meeting and listens to the statements and facts there related can well doubt that God is true to his promise to hear the prayer of faith when offered to him in earnest sincerity.

Accounts from those who have asked prayer continue to come, of answers to prayer. A gentleman said: "A few days ago I asked your prayers for a certain individual, whose salvation lay as a great burden on my heart. I knew the man did not feel the least concern about his soul, but I did. He knew nothing about my asking for prayer. He was utterly heedless of his salvation. You may think it surprised me to find that man, soon after my asking for prayer for him here, in great spiritual trouble. He came to me to have me tell him what he should do to be saved. No! I was not surprised. Some brother prayed, and when I heard and joined in that prayer, I felt assured that the man would be saved. It proved to be with him the last call and the eleventh hour. The man who was then in full health soon after was called suddenly to test the reality of his hope. Death came, beckoning him away, and his going was one of triumph and joy—he died in the Lord."

A gentleman said he had lately spent some time in Rochester. The revival had reached and affected all parts of the population to an extent to which he never expected to see any city affected. It had reached the House of Refuge. He had been requested to go into it and labor among the inmates. He said he was from Cleveland, and it became known to the inmates where he was from. A little boy came to him and inquired if he was soon going back to Cleveland. He answered, "Yes." "Then," said the little boy: "I want you to go and find out my mother. You will find her at No. —in——street. Tell her you have seen me—that I am in the House of Refuge in Rochester. Tell her I have become a Christian, and here I have found another House of Refuge—even Jesus Christ." The gentleman said he made himself fully acquainted with this case, and he was persuaded that this little truant and wicked boy had really become a child of God. Thus the mighty work of grace in Rochester had reached a class of youth who were shut out or rather shut in from the world, and many there have taken sanctuary in Jesus Christ.

For the Prayer-Meeting.

A Prayerless Christian.

WHAT is that? Those words are contradictory. I have heard of a lifeless speaker—of a soulless miser—and a heartless mother. I think those phrases are intelligible. No one is mislaid by them. No one believes that a dead man literally speaks; but there are many men whose speaking has very little life. We do not suppose that even the miser has no soul; but people generally think that what he has must be exceeding small. No mother is literally without a heart; but I have just read of one

who gave her child to strangers, and devoted herself to infamy. And she is said to be intelligent. Heartless is a very mild term to employ in characterizing such a mother.

But a *prayerless Christian!* I do not understand what that can be. I can about as easily conceive of a perfect harp without strings, or flowing fountain without water, or a sun without light, as of a Christian without prayer. Doubtless there are many *professed* Christians who do not pray. The persecuting Saul was a very prominent professor. I presume he repeated his forms of prayer daily. Nevertheless, Saul lived without prayer. He was a persecutor and a blasphemer; and how could he pray? But when he ceased to be Saul the persecutor, and by rich grace was made Paul the Christian, one of the first things we find recorded is, "behold he prayeth." It was surprising intelligence to those whom he had persecuted. They could hardly credit their own eyes and ears. But they knew the power of redeeming grace. It abounded to the chief of sinners. When they heard from the highest authority that Saul prayed, they knew that he was a changed man —a Christian. Did Paul *continue* to pray? Yes, night and day, and as long as he lived. And speaking by the Holy Ghost, he enjoined on his fellow-Christians that they should "pray without ceasing." He would as soon have thought of living without food as without prayer.

Can any Christian live without prayer? Not long. A *professor* may; but can a true child of God live long in the neglect of prayer? No. A Christian without a closet! A Christian who does not love the duty of prayer! who neglects the prayer-room? A Christian parent who has no family alter? Oh! do not dream of such things; such contradictions. Talk of the blind man who is filled with raptures when the rainbow spans the heavens; or of the deaf man who is ravished with soft music; but tell me not of the man who loves the Savior of sinners, and yet does not love prayer.

"But do not real Christians sometimes neglect prayer for a season? I fear they do. I must think that David was living so when he was indulging in that memorable, fearful course of sin. "How long may a Christian neglect prayer?" I know not. I would not advise you to make the experiment. The wish to make such a trial would, of itself, be strong evidence that you are not a Christian. One of the last things to be mentioned is the effort of a Christian to live without communing with God. How unnatural and how ungrateful. Does he *love* the Savior, who desires not to *pray* to him?

No, professed disciple of Christ. Do not try how long you can live without prayer; but seek to know what it is to *continue* "*instant in prayer.*" The best experiments in religious affairs are those which mortify the flesh, and humble the heart, and bring us into nearness and conformity to God. Prayer is eminently conducive to these results. Go to the great Heartsearcher with a full and contrite confession of your sins, and plead the merits of atoning blood, and cast your soul on divine mercy, and tell me if you could have been better

Argumentative Preaching.

ACCORDINGLY we find that the ablest ministers of the Gospel have been those who "applied their hearts to seek out wisdom and the reason of things." In reading the sermons of the elder Edwards we stand in awe; for he speaks not as one who sings a pleasant song, but in the name of Him who says: "Preach the preaching that I bid thee." There is something in his discourses that presses us, crowds upon us, follows hard after us; and, if we flee from it, it is close upon our footsteps; and there is no sense in our trying to escape it. It is the power of God's Word, shown to be God's Word, identified as such, and therefore we cannot stay it in its onward urging. Overcome by his argument, we fall a prey at once to his appeal. His discussion interests us; we are at once surprised, then taken captive, and afterward borne along "whithersoever the governor listeth." So was it with Paul. "He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath," and as he once "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment, Felix trembled." He was not afraid of abstruse preaching, nor of metaphysical preaching, but he uttered words hard to be understood and liable to be wrested by the unlearned and unstable, still he enforced them by such compressed ratiocination as to make his hearers feel that in striving against him they were striving against God. The direct tendency of strong argument is, to transfer the reasoner's appeal from the sphere of his own opinions to the sphere of divine inspiration; and he who braces himself against this appeal strikes and presses against a brazen wall. Hence it is characteristic of every preacher who fortifies his words by giving the reason for them to speak as with authority. "My words are not my own," he seems to declare, "but I have proved them; and you know them to be true. He that receiveth them receiveth not me alone, but him who sent me. He that despiseth them poureth contempt not on me alone, but upon his own mind, and upon his Maker, and shall at last wonder and perish."—*Bibliotheca Sacra.*

Power of Personal Holiness.

NEVER will the Church meet her solemn responsibilities until her children, bursting asunder the shackles that bind them, and rising out of the slough of earthliness in which they are sunk, come up to that high measure of evangelical sanctification which the voice of Scripture and the exigencies of a dying world alike demand of them. There is a moral omnipotence in holiness. Argument may be resisted, persuasion and entreaty may be scorned. The thrilling appeals and monitions of the pulpit, set forth with all the vigor of logic and all the glow of eloquence, may be evaded or disregarded. But the exhibition of exalted piety has a might which nothing can withstand; it is truth embodied; it is the Gospel burning in the hearts, beaming from the eyes, breathing from the lips, and preaching in the lives of its votaries. No sophistry can elude it, no conscience can ward it off; no bosom wears a mail that can brave the energy of its attack. It speaks in all languages,

in all climes, and to all phases of our nature. It is universal—invincible; and, clad in immortal panoply, goes on from victory to victory.

Let Zion, through all her departments, but reach this elevated point, and how rapid and triumphant would be her progress! With what overpowering demonstration would her tidings be attended! What numerous and ever-flowing channels would pour into her treasury the requisite means; and what hosts of her consecrated sons would stand forth to publish on every shore the mandates of her King! And how richly would the showers of Divine influence be shed down, quickening into life the seed which she scatters, filling the desolate places with verdure and joy, and changing this blighted earth into the garden of our Lord. —*Rev. Geo. B. Ide.*

My Mother in her Closet.

NOTHING used to impress upon my mind so strongly the reality and excellence of religion as my mother's counsels and prayers. Very frequently she retired with her children to a private room; and after she had read the Bible with us, and given us some good instruction and advice, kneeled down with us and offered a prayer which, for apparent earnestness and fervor, I have seldom known equalled. These seasons were always pleasant to us; and sometimes we looked forward to them with impatience. My mother seemed to me then almost an angel; her language, her manner, the very expression of her countenance, indicating great nearness to the throne of grace. I could not have shown levity at such times. It would have been impossible. I felt then that it was a great blessing to have a praying mother; and I have felt it much more sensibly since. Those counsels and prayers time will never efface from my memory. They form, as it were, a part of my very constitution.

The Funeral Knell.

THERE is something touching and tender in the tolling bell. Its sounds strike on the heart. It tells of the departing spirit to the untried realms of the spirit land. It tells of another life closed on earth—of sundered ties, and anguished hearts, and mourning friends—of an opening grave—of sad obsequies—of the solemn procession, and of the farewell look on the loved form of the mortal remains. How many plans in life are suddenly interrupted—broken up and closed by the unexpected coming of the messenger on the pale horse. So it was in the case of Mr. ——. The bell tolled. It struck thirty-three. A man in the vigor of life had died; one in whom many hopes centered. A married man was torn from a beloved companion, a father removed from his family, a son from kind parents, a brother hurried off from affectionate kindness—a citizen, a man of business. The funeral came; an appropriate prayer was made at the house, the coffin looked into at the house, and then the procession moved to of

God, where solemn remarks were uttered, slow music heard, and another suitable prayer offered. I gazed sadly upon the aged parent, tottering upon the borders of the grave, and the mourning compauy. But the most stricken one was not there. She mourned alone, with health impaired. The coffin was borne to the grave and lowered down. Friends cast a mournful look there. The assembly dispersed. In returning from that impressive scene I passed a store. It was shut. Darkness and silence reigned within. One of its occupants, the senior partner, had just entered the new-made grave. My heart sunk within me. Is such a true sketch of earth's scenes? Are such dark clouds continually settling upon the abodes of men? Yes, I must die! You must! Every person is destined to the grave. What comes then? What will be true of us the next moment after death? God speaks in his providence. Who hears—obeys—is preparing for eternity? O sinner, stop! You may be within a step of ruin—of eternal death. Listen to the entreaties of heaven. Fall as a penitent before the cross. Then, when you come out on the other side of Jordan, a crown of glory will fall on your head, and angels will bear you to a seat at the right hand of God.

The Sinner a Miracle of Grace.

WHOEVER has been made by the grace of God a partaker of holiness—who has been truly born again and possesses a good *hope in Christ, looks* back with wonder and gratitude upon the day of his redemption and espousal to Christ. He describes the victory he has achieved, not to his own powers or courage, but adores the grace which set him free, and strikes a loud note of praise to the Lamb. It is incomprehensible to him that the love of God should have followed him so far, his patience endured so long, and that his wayward feet should at length have been turned into the paths of peace. With trembling delight and an humble song, he looks at the hole whence he was taken, and the pit from whence he was digged. If he had been suffered to follow his own imaginations, and to go after the desires of his own heart, he would not have repented. His choice and purpose were to die. He gave heed to all else but the invitations of the gospel, and made haste to despise the grace of God. A gentle voice at length stirred his slumbering conscience and awakened him to his lost estate. His peace and security in sin were gone. The world lost its charms. His soul was in bitterness and found no light or comfort. Sin pressed upon him a heavy load, and he could find no relief. He knew not where to go. But the same Spirit which opened his heart to give heed to the things which belonged to his peace, led him on step by step to the cross of Christ. Light broke into his darkened soul. Jesus became a living, almighty, present Savior. The glories of the gospel began to be revealed, and the cross of Christ to stand

forth in its power and worth. Strange process and strange transformation! Old things have become new. The things once hated and despised became beautiful and more to be desired than all else. The word, the people, the service of God, are all loved and enjoyed. The ways of sin are forsaken, a new life commenced, and the soul addresses itself to new duties and new enjoyments. These are marvels of grace, trophies of that cross, whose riches are untold and unsearchable.

The Dragon of the Abyss.

IMPORTANT and striking truth is often conveyed to the mind by fable, and enforced on the attention with great power, as in the following Eastern story:

"A man was traveling in Syria, leading his camel by the bridle. Suddenly the animal is seized with a panic of fears; he raises himself with impetuosity, foams and bounds in a manner so horrible that his master abandons him in anguish, and tries to save himself. He perceives at a distance from the road a deep stream, and as he still heard the frightful neighings of the camel, he sought a refuge there, and fell over a precipice. But a shrub held him up. He clung to it with both hands, and cast on every side his anxious eyes. Above him is the terrible camel, of which he does not lose sight for a moment. In the abyss below is a dragon, who opens his monstrous jaws, and seems waiting to devour him. At the side of him he sees two mice, one white and the other black, who gnaw in turn at the root of the shrub which serves him for a support, The unfortunate man remains there frozen with terror, and seeing no retreat, no means of safety. Suddenly, on a little branch of a shrub, he discovers some fruit. At that moment he ceases to observe the rage of the camel, the jaws of the dragon, and the frightful activity of the mice. He reaches out his hand toward the fruit, he gathers it, and in the sweet taste, forgets his fears and dangers.

"Do you ask who is this madman, who can forget so quickly a mortal peril? That man is thyself. The dragon of the stream is the everopen abyss of death. The camel represents the sorrows of life. The two mice who are gnawing at the roots of the shrub, are day and night; and in this situation, the fruit of pleasure attracts you. You forget the anxieties of life, the threatenings of death, the rapid succession of day and night, to seek the plant of voluptuousness on the borders of the tomb.,'

The Ministry of the Age.

No preceding generation of ministers ever saw such a day as this! Such openings for usefulness; such calls for exertion; such multiplied and extensive fields whitening to harvest; such abundant and potent means for doing good to mankind. To live now, is a talent put into your hands, for which you must give an account. Have you an ardor of piety, a tone of moral sentiment, a spirit of enterprise, corresponding with this

not, give yourself no rest till you, in some good measure, attain them all. If an ancient heathen rhetorician, in giving directions for the attainment of the "sublime," in writing, could say: "Spare no labor to educate your soul to grandeur, and to impregnate it with great and generous ideas;" much more may the same language be addressed to the gospel minister, in the present state of the Church's progress. Take increasing pains to get large views of ministerial furniture, ministerial duty, and ministerial success. Strive to educate your souls to grandeur of conception and grandeur of wishes, and hopes, and enterprise for the moral benefit of your fellow-men. Aim high. Let no petty plans satisfy you, either as to acquirement or exertion. Every one of you, however humble his talents, if really disposed to make the most of what God has given him might cause his influence to be felt to the ends of the earth.—*Dr. Miller.*

The Richest Jewel.

As God reckons jewelry there is no brilliant which flashes with such lustre as the tear of true penitence. Yet God only knoweth what heart pressure as in a vise, what rendings and ringings of soul, what crushing of pride, and wrestlings in agony may have been needful, in order to press out that jewel drop upon the cheek of the stubborn sufferer! We have sometimes met with a person in social circles who possessed a peculiar gentleness and docility of character. As we came to know her better we were charmed by her calm self-poise and her heroic submissiveness to God under sudden shocks of calamity. We could not but admire so beautiful a character. We envied its possessor. We coveted such a spirit for ourselves. Ah! we little knew at what a fearful price of severe chastisements and bitter disappointments; of hopes desolated and expectations crossed; of faith put to the rack and patience burning bright in seven times heated furnaces—all that meek loveliness of character had been gained. So true is it that he who would be "rich towards God" must be willing to toil hard, and bear sore afflictions, in order to win the precious acquisitions.

Five Consciences.

THERE are five kinds of consciences on foot in the world; first, an ignorant conscience, which neither sees nor says anything—neither beholds the sins in the soul, nor reproves them; secondly, the flattering conscience, whose speech is worse than silence itself, which, though seeing sin, soothes men in the committing thereof; thirdly, the seared conscience, which has neither sight, speech, nor sense, in men that are "past feeling;" fourthly, the wounded conscience, frightened with sin; the fifth is a quiet and clear conscience, purified in Christ. A wounded conscience is rather painful than sinful—an affliction, no offence—and is the ready way, at the next remove, to be turned into a quiet conscience.—*Kitto.*

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SERMON XIV.

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DEISM AND CHRISTIANITY COMPARED.

"——— ye believe in God, believe also in me."—ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL, 14:1.

"IF ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also," was the declaration of the Saviour to the faithless ones, and when he said of himself, "I came forth from the Father," he announced a truth full of promise to the world. The human mind, in its strivings after the things which are above itself, has made some strange exhibitions of its own capacities, but upon no subject has this strangeness been more wonderfully manifested, than upon that subject which includes the being and the attributes of God. Were it my task to illustrate that awful contradiction in human nature, which at one time proves man to be crazy, and at another time sane, I should appeal, in the first place, to what has been written and spoken concerning the Deity. True it is, that if the world contained no other proof of the great fact of the fall, man carries within him proofs enough, and the denial of that proof is only another form of witnessing to the fact. In the sway and motion of this disjointed being, we read the story of transgression, and when we see how the life here is all conflict with itself, how the parts have turned against, and are acting against one another, the conclusion comes without the seeking, that man was not sent forth in such a form from the hand of God.

And again, in view of what man proves himself to be, we hardly

wonder that some should take up the notion that God had little to do with his creation—that man had no higher parentage than accident, and has no better destiny than fate. This conclusion, having in it more of the bitter than the other, would have a stronghold, and a wide empire, were it not for those wonderful evidences which prove man's immortality to himself, thus struggling with and destroying the supposition that man was the child of chance.

It remains, therefore, after these centuries of speculation, that no theory harmonizes with experience like the theory of the fall of man—that man was made upright, but did afterwards transgress, and that the struggle which ever since he has maintained is a struggle between that original purity and power, and that after sin and weakness. This accounts for the crosses and the contradictions of his nature, the knowledge and the ignorance, the power and the weakness, the truth and the error, the wisdom and the folly, which alternate so wonderfully in his life, and struggle together in the character.

We have spoken of man's natural views of the divine Being—views grounded upon the testimony of the things without, and the things within—nature, and conscience, and experience, all pouring in a testimony to the being and the greatness of the one Invisible. It is true, moreover, that this testimony led those who had no other, to do just what the text asserts—to "believe in God," not always with a true apprehension of his character, but, at the same time, with a fixedness of belief in his existence and presence, which redeems heathenism from some of its absurdities, and which saved man from certain forms of sin.

It may be that the words of the text were first spoken to those who believed in God as he was revealed to the Jew, and that the Saviour invites them to believe in him, even as they believed in the God of Abraham and of the Prophets. The faith, too, in himself, to the exercise of which he urges them, was then to do a comforting work, and hence he says, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God,—believe also in me." He had told them that he was to go away, and that they would see him no more; and, perhaps, in view of this teaching, the reasoning of the passage is this: "Ye believe in God although he is invisible, and when I also pass into that invisible state, you must believe in me then, even as ye believe in God now. The same laws which apply to the Father in his invisible existence, must be applied to me, after I am taken from the world, and then you must believe in me, although invisible, even as now ye believe in him."

We propose, as our remarks would indicate, to give a broader sense to the words, and to draw from them this proposition, namely, those who believe in God should, for the same reasons, believe in Jesus Christ. This is the point to which we ask your attention.

We proceed, then, to remark, that there are many persons living in Christian communities, whose religion, so far as they have any consists in an acknowledgment of the being, the attributes, and the providence of God. They believe that there is a God—that he has power over them, and over all things, that he is infinite in wisdom, and goodness, and knowledge, and truth—that they are his subjects now, and must account to him at the last. They have also some idea of what he will reward, and what he will punish; that his friendship is worth the having, and that in his frown there is a curse. They have reached these truths, as they think, by the light of nature—they are truths which, they say, conscience sanctions and reason approves, and these are the great truths of that natural religion upon which they rest to the exclusion of the religion which is revealed. It will be seen that the Deist occupies a position between the Atheist and the Christian—the Atheist believe ing in no God at all, and the Christian believing in God, not merely as he is manifested in nature, but as he lives and speaks in the person of his Son. Now, as a mere point to reason from, Atheism is certainly better than Deism, if it be the object of both to overthrow Christianity. Atheism, by its wide-sweeping negation, carries down Christianity because it takes every thing else along with it; it leaves you without a point upon which to rest; as exterminating as the two philosophers, whom Pope in his line has helped to make immortal in spite of themselves, one of them denying the existence of the body, and the other the existence of the soul, so that, between the two, there was not much of man left to reason about. Such is the remorseless sweep of Atheism, and it can do more by the simple power of denial, than any thing else with which we are acquainted. The position of the Deist relatively to Christianity, is one far more assailable, and far more difficult to hold. One reason for this is, that the proof by which the Deist demonstrates the truth of his position, is the very proof by which we demonstrate the truth of Christianity. The chain of evidence runs in parallel lines; nay, the two chains so cross and interlock with one another, that one can not be broken without breaking the other. Hence the position of him who attempts to hold together the one, while he himself is striking at the links of the other, is a position of difficulty.

If the Deist does any thing more than assume the being, the attributes, and the providence of God—if he believes in God because he has proved all that he believes—then there is not a point in that proof which does not bear directly upon the claims of Christianity. It may be true that many who confess God in nature, but deny him in revelation, confess him upon a kind of wholesale evidence which they have never analyzed, and do not half understand They behold the great work of life, and conclude that this

life must have had a parentage; they look over the gorgeous wealth of creation, and infer that here are the scatterings of a treasury that can never fail; the path of the planet through the heavens, and the poise of the insect upon the flower, are both lessons upon God, which it is much easier to receive than to reject. To deny God—why, this is to deny ourselves; and then, says the reasoner, from the nature of his work we infer the nature of his character, and upon this ladder we climb until we reach the throne of the Almighty, and see him as he is.

But now, what fact in nature ever proved the unity of God, and how know you, that in place of this one throne, and this one Deity upon it, there may not be many thrones, and many gods, each with subjects, and each with empires of his own? You talk of the oneness of God, and reason from it as a certain and admitted truth; but when did nature prove that, and where is the demonstration? The heathen knew as much, aside from revelation, as you know upon this point; and they settled upon the conclusion that there was a plurality of gods. And what argument or proof can you bring from nature, to prove that they were wrong and that you are right? Nay, what means this conflict that is going on in the world—the conflict of truth with falsehood, right with might, good with evil; and what less is it, in its sweep and power, than the great battle of the gods, each contending for mastery and for empire? Would one god thus war with himself—thus permit his own laws to contend with one another, and his own territory to be the scene of strife?

The truth is, that the Deist has not a single reason for believing in the unity of God, aside from those which he has unconsciously borrowed from revelation. All these notions concerning truth, and morality, and conscience, and Deity, which men term their religion, and by way of excellence "the religion of reason," a faith which they set against revelation, and call it enough, is, in truth, but an off-shoot from the Word; it never did, and never can prove itself. This is the position of one who professes to believe in God, while he rejects the Gospel of his Son; he has not an argument for his own faith, which is not stronger in its testimony to that which he rejects, than to that which he admits.

Now, as to the evidence which proves the creed of the Deist—not in that which it denies, but in that which it affirms—there is not a point in that evidence which does not prove Christianity just as conclusively as it proves Deism. If the latter is true, the former is true—the evidence which reveals the Father reveals also the Son. What fact in nature, illustrating any one of the attributes of the Father, that has not its parallel in the history of the Son—existence, knowledge, power, works, all are godlike in the Son, even as they are in the Father. We may, indeed, dispute the

record, and affirm that the testimony of our senses is far more reliable than the testimony of these witnesses—that we see and know ourselves of the Father, while the knowledge of the Son comes to us through history. But we meet this objection by asking, What certainty attaches to the evidences of our senses that did not attach to the senses of these men of a distant day, and why, if there were deception or mistake then, may there not be both also now? The testimony has to us all the force of experience, and the facts which it affirms are as reliable as any thing within our own observation. When, then, the Deist professes to believe in one god, and to rest his belief upon evidence, while at the same time he rejects revelation, he thereby places himself in a most involved position, because his own proofs carry revelation along with them; the very line of argument which proves what he believes proves also what he rejects, and if the argument be not good for both it is not good for either.

The world, in its wondrous powers, asserts and proves its divine origin, and when we ask if wonders quite as great did not cluster about the birth and about the cradle of Christianity, the question is its own evidence, it answers itself. The world is wondrous in its history, and what but wonders have made up the story of our faith from the beginning until now? If, therefore, creation in its origin and in its history proves the being and the parentage of God, redemption, in its origin and in its history, proves the same; the other could no more have taken form and life without God than the one. Indeed, I would as soon assume the task of proving that man made the world, as that man made Christianity; and I could as readily tell you how human powers wrought for the hanging of the sun in the heavens, and for the sending forth of this earth upon her journey, as for the production of that which was manifest in the life and in the person of the Son of God. If we hold both to the strict line of demonstration, one without God is as incomprehensible as the other, while human powers are inadequate for the production of either result.

But we come to a second consideration. It is manifest, after all that may be said, that the Deist finds but little use for his reason in the shaping of his creed. Passion, and desire, and wickedness, are the things which give form and substance to his opinions. He imagines that he is better off, that he has higher and better chances under the religion of Deism, than under the religion of Christianity. He imagines that there is less of punishment implied and asserted in the system of nature than in that of grace; that there is more liberty of sinning and less danger from its consequences. Indeed, the threats of Christianity are his strong reasons for not believing in it. But in this case his passion is as wrong as was his reason in the other. Christianity is a better

friend to him, even in his sin, than Deism. In his blindness he clings to the system which is most against him, he flies to the refuge of a rock which will fall upon him and grind him to powder. Deism is, in fact, Christianity, with all its threats and with none of its promises; it is law without Gospel, judgment without mercy. It makes us conscious of sin without opening the way of escape; it preaches of our immortality, and we fear lest that should be our curse, while all around this horizon are hanging clouds and muttering thunders, making life an awful thing to one who sees it as it is. The fear of the Deist, if in truth he lives upon his creed, predominates over his hopes; the very mysteries and uncertainties of his state and destiny induce those anxious forebodings, which are known to all, as among the darkest of human sorrows.

It is not the man who stands in the pulpit who alone preaches of judgment and of punishment, neither are these laws and consequences which attach especially to the Christian system; there are preachers within us whose sermons we must hear, and these things are in the Bible of nature as well as in the Book of grace. To suppose that we escape the threat and the fear of punishment by denying the authority of the Bible, is simply one great mistake. There is punishment in natural religion as surely as in the revealed, and we can as readily banish from the latter as from the former. The distinction at this point between the religion of nature and that of the Bible, is, not that the latter threatens while the former does not, but, that the religion of nature is a religion of judgment without mercy, while the Bible cannot warn of danger without pointing to the refuge.

Natural religion is like the cataract at midnight and in a storm —the awful rush and the dull thunder of the falling waters blending with the howl of the winds, and the black drapery of the darkness; a picture that of relentless power, going forward without sight or hearing to do its work of death. And what shall we say of that same cataract when, in the still day of summer, the sun rests upon its waters and transforms the terrible into the beautiful, when the timid flower leans over its verge, and lives in the baptism of its spray, when that bow of heaven watches around the flood like a spirit, now sleeping upon the foam bubbles at its base, now climbing the sheet of silver, and resting midway in its ascent, and now poising upon the edge of the fall, and lending its prism to the drops as they hurry into unknown depths, thus playing with the stern and awful as if love had triumphed over power!

What shall we say of this but that this is a picture of God, when in wrath he remembered mercy, when, over the hurrying waters of passion he placed the bow of pardon, and told us not to tremble as we looked upon the rushing tide! Oh! the believer in a mere natural religion, where he finds one thing to inspire

hope, finds many things to inspire fear; the actings of his reason and of his conscience are toward the terrible, and he looks into eternity with a solemn awe, not knowing the things which shall befal him there. The effort to escape the idea of punishment by a rejection of the teachings of the Bible, is simply self-destructive, for punishment enters as certainly into the creed of the Deist as into the creed of the Christian, while with the Christian there is a hope and promise of which the other has none. To the natural man come warnings of wrath and signs of judgment which he can no more beat back than he could the in-rushing tide of ocean. He knows that there is punishment somewhere, for he feels it in his daily life, and he has secret prophecies which are as dark as the shadow of the grave. Why, this notion of punishment was as firmly rooted in the minds of men before the Scriptures were known, as it is now—the Bible did not originate it—the Bible did not declare it as new truth, it did but reaffirm it, and give shape, and precision, and authority thereto. The new truth of the Bible is nearly all love and mercy; here is the burden of its revelation, not punishment, because punishment was revealed before, and hence the mission of the Savior was one of salvation! Oh! the world knew and groaned under the knowledge, that the curse was upon itself; it did not want a revelation to tell that, for human misery voiced that lesson in its cries, and death looked it from its fixed eye until the demonstration rose into awfulness. That for which the earth pleaded, in the low wail of its sorrowing population, was something quite different from this.

The stifled voice of the weepers as it rose in broken accents from the misery in which it had its birth—the cry which entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth—was a cry for help. It was a cry for some way of escape, and when the Son of God heard that cry, and saw that none save himself could answer it, he said to the spirits who waited about his throne: "Lo, I come." He did come, and there, in the volume of the book where all is written of Him, are treasured his sayings and his acts. He came—not to make more certain the punishment, for that was certain enough before—but to show us a way of escape. To open this way did he travail in the greatness of his strength; he laid hands upon the bolts and fastenings which frowned upon us,, and wrenching them from their holdings, said to the captives: "Go forth." His great work was one of deliverance, a work of mercy and of love. He came "to seek and to save that which was lost," and here is the distinction between his system and the religion of nature; the one is redeeming and saving in its principles, while the other promises nothing but judgment and condemnation. Here is the fulness and the glory of God in the Son—that in the Son, God is revealed in his mercy and in his love.

What a foolish and fatal struggle is ours when we resist and reject this scheme of salvation which brings hope, and hold to another revelation which has none. It takes us up at the very place where natural religion leaves us—and that place is sad and dark—and conducts us on into a region of promise and of hope. It has threats, and fears, and punishments, but it has something more with them, and we affirm that to reject it because these are in it, and hold to another system which has nothing but these, is a folly which verges upon madness. This is the folly of the Deist, and here is the reason why, if the mortal has hope in God, he must obey the injunction of the text: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me;" and here, too, quite at the close of our remarks, we touch the very feeling which the words of the text, as first spoken, were intended to produce. They were spoken as words of comfort: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

The stern attributes of the Deity which nature declares and proves, are balanced by those milder attributes which are revealed in the Son; the judgment and the justice of the one being tempered by the mercy and the love of the other. And yet, in the rejection of the Son, men seek a refuge for themselves as sinners, while here, in the Son, is their stronghold in the day of wrath. The religion which tells of pardon and forgiveness, is not the religion of nature, but the religion of the cross; the system that should be rejected on account of the terrors which it preaches, and the doom to which it sternly points, is that to which men hold as a substitute for Christianity. The darkness which of old was upon the nations was a darkness full of terror; in the uncertainties of that night, men pictured forms more awful than we see in dreams, and now all that the Bible says, is little more than the reaffirming of truths which nature was the first to utter. The light which Christianity threw aslant that darkness, when its ray rested like a belt of fire upon the night, was a light which, while it disclosed dangers, also revealed a way of escape. The shadows, as they moved before its power, rolled away like a curtain, that had shaded mighty things, and there in the dimness stood a cross, with a man stretched upon it, a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Here was the picture and the fulness of redemption, and about this cross scene gathered promises which were to abide after the passing away of the heavens and the earth.

Thus far, not one jot or title has failed; these promises are now in the course of fulfilment, and they tell you how, in the midst of wrath, you may find mercy. Why reject God's word because it speaks of danger, when it has power to save from these dangers, this being its great design?

The dangers are revealed, that with the more earnestness you

may hasten to the refuge, and we now say that the danger must remain whether you receive the Gospel or reject it. Contend not, then, with the best and truest friend that you will ever know—the only system of truth that has a hope for every fear, and for every peril a way of escape.

"Ye believe in God," the devils also believe and tremble, and that because, while they know the power of his wrath, they have have no hope in his mercy. And what will a belief in God avail you more than them, if it reaches not to God in Christ, and fixes its grasp upon the great truths of redemption? Oh? we know too much of God already, as he reveals himself out of Christ, for pain, and misery, and death are solemn teachers, proving that there is judgment here, and pointing to a judgment to come. God, in the Son, supplies us with another kind of knowledge, a knowledge whose relation to the other is like that of joy to sorrow, like that of life to death.

SERMON XV.

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GOD'S ESTIMATE OF THE VALUE OF MAN.

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's welfare."—1 Cor. 10: 24.

I CAN taste no refreshment until this earth shall own the sway of its Redeemer!—was the exclamation of one of the best minds of the day. His fervent desire was fixed upon the moral progress of the race. It was his ruling desire. Other minds are intent on the same grand object, minds that seem to show no affinity for the doctrines of Christianity. They would have the elevation of man and the amelioration of society without Christianity, perhaps in opposition to its entire system. They allege that Christianity is in the way of human progress, and that if the world ever arrives at that great ideal, it must be by the gradual development of the race according to its present principles, and acccording to its present progress. To illustrate their theory, they say that the whole history of the race in the past may be compared to a colossal man whose life reaches from the creation to the last limits of time. The successive generations of men are the days of his life. The discoveries and inventions which characterize the different epochs of the

world's history are his works. The creeds, opinions, doctrines, and principles of the successive ages are his thoughts. The state of society are his manners. He grows in knowledge and self-control, and in visible size as we do, and his education is in the same way, and for the same reasons similar to ours. And this, they further add, is not a mere figure, but a compendious statement of a very comprehensive fact, a power whereby the present gathers itself in the past.

If this ingenious representation were true, that colossal man at the present must be a being of hugely mis-shapen growth, and of exceedingly irregular proportions, and of a habitude that can dose through centuries. Akin to the injustice of all such dreamers, they first borrow their fundamental principles from the Scriptures, and then turn round to demolish the magazine whence they are taken. The probability is sufficiently strong that the idea of moral progress, as little as the doctrine of redemption, would never have entered the human mind had it not been first disclosed in the Scriptures. Still candour forces us to admit that with a system so perfect and so powerful as Christianity has proved itself to be, with its sublime principles, its benign spirit, its grand remedial provisions, its high reformatory character, and all depending for their efficient influence upon a divine agency, the mystery is as dark as it is painful, that so many centuries have been permitted to elapse, and yet the human race is still left to groan under accumulated miseries. War rages as fiercely as ever it did, oppression holds down its victim, wrong and injustice walk arm in arm, ignorance sits beneath its dark cloud, vice strikes its root deep in the soil of social life, idolatry nails its idol to the niche, governments riot in corruption, and sorrow, suffering, and tears are still the sad lot of man. The expected age for which the yearning creation has looked for centuries, seems, if coming at all, only its dawn. No Christian nation has yet become the land of Beulah, no sun of sevenfold splendour illumines the smallest section of Christendom. Justice is nowhere established, our courts of law are mere lotteries, our Governments yet uncleansed from heathen vices. The full, clear high-principled nature of the Gospel has not been brought to bear upon the masses with anything like the might of its beneficence. Still, with these sad admissions, it must be acknowledged that there is sufficient power in the Gospel to satisfy man's highest anticipations, and to answer the largest demands of the world. There is enough for the removal of all human ills, and the promotion of the highest human welfare. The text contains the element of power that can effect it all. In announcing it you have all doubtless perceived that I have substituted the word welfare for the word wealth. My reason for the change is simply this: in the text there is no substantive expressed, but simply the

neuter article. By casting the eye along the chapter we find that the name and article occur together in the last verse. All we do is to substitute that in the place of the word wealth, which is not so expressive, and which strongly disagrees with the context. The text is thrown into the discussion of the subject of the chapter as a general principle, whose spirit is fundamental of all moral progress.

I. The first truth which it presents to our consideration is that it fairly expresses God's estimate of the value of man.

The evidence of his regard for man gleams on almost every page of the Bible. It appears in the rich array of means intended for his instruction and development, and in the still richer and more wondrous provision made to exalt him to dignity and honour. Redemption is God's highest practical testimony to the worth of man, and yet redemption itself is only the grand means of leading him back to benevolence. The text contains in itself the essence of every moral precept, and therefore embodies most fully God's estimate of man. Herein He expresses the strength of His desire for the highest welfare of man, by calling into requisition the activity and entire influence of every man in aid of the welfare of every other man, and in default of the duty, places in forfeit his individual happiness. Basing the value of man on his original nature, and not on his present character, he makes it the duty of the race to seek the well-being of one as if the one were the race. The spirit of the precept seems to run in this tenor: that whenever the higher good of one man demands it, each one of the race shall voluntarily surrender his own welfare rather than impair or injure his. In its practical operation the principle is the same as if God should collect the race around him, and selecting one man from the exceeding multitude, should elevate him in the sight and presence of all, and there laying his command upon all, should forbid all wrong or injury to be done him, and enjoin, with kind and benevolent authority, that each should care for his welfare with the same constant and tender solicitude as if he held his own welfare in trust only for him; and then in return for the duty should make each one of that exceeding multitude the object of the same universal regard and attention. It binds the race together in such a chain of dependence, that if a single link be flawed or broken, the strength of the whole will be weakened, and the invisible current of influence intended to pass through every portion either destroyed or interrupted. The connection is so close that if a single man be benefited, the race is benefited in him; and if a single man be injured or degraded, the whole are degraded in his individual degradation. The value and place of every member corresponds to the value and place of every depen-

dent link. The subtile current which goes from one passes through all, whether for good or for evil. The principle of the text, then, does not barely accord to every man his individual natural and moral rights. It does more; it makes those rights the foundation of good to the race, and each one responsible for their preservation and influence.

Were man to value man according to this divine standard, the world would be advanced to a higher state of progress than it has ever witnessed. It is by departing from this standard and erecting one of their own, that they contrive to lower the true estimate of humanity and aid in building the tower of the world's miseries. In place of regarding the elevation of man as the great aim of his exertion and labors, his object has been to depress and degrade him to the lowest possible scale of value. His measure of human value is strength of muscle, industrial skill, general utility, the amount he can earn, or the quantity of labor he can perform. God takes into account his high moral nature, his immortality of being, his grand capacities, the effect of his endless influence through the long line of his endless being. God would raise man to what he may be, and can be, by calling out the right use of his various powers, and the power of all other resources in his behalf.

The text, therefore, is God's practical estimate of human value. It stands out more fully than a distinct or formal affirmation. Its language is so plain that it cannot well be mistaken, while its spirit is the vital element of all moral elevation and progress. The whole is so clear, so just, so reasonable, that it seems to me, if the voice of the divine Redeemer were to break in upon the stillness of this assembly, and in its mild authoritative tones designate the name of some individual in the midst of us; and then in tones of equal tenderness and authority enjoin upon each to unite our efforts in seeking his highest temporal and eternal welfare, it would not be so strong and certain a proof of his regard for man as he has here given in this divine fundamental enactment which he has instituted for the guidance of human conduct for all time and through eternity. No miracle could be a stronger attestation of his estimate of man than he has expressed in establishing it as the fixed and immutable law of his kingdom.

Some, in their endeavors to exalt the value of man have supposed that it would have been well worthy of the Creator, if he had called into being this great fabric of the universe, and continued it for ever, simply for the purpose of instructing a single immortal mind. Were the supposition well substantiated, we do not see how it could be a higher proof of God's estimate of man than he has given in the principle of the text, To make immortal

minds the aiders and instructors of immortal minds in the use of their reciprocal and collective influence, and that under the highest principle of their nature, binding them in everlasting bonds of affection to one another, is certainly something so much higher than the mere tuition of material nature, as to make the supposition almost vanish from consideration. Such, then, is the exalted condition under which men are born, that this great law of kindness stands ready to meet us as soon as we enter the precincts of life. God has engraven it on our very constitution; nay, he has engraven it on the very constitution of the universe. It encircles us with its kind embrace wherever we are; it leads us by its kind direction wherever we go. It is the divine warrant of our safe conduct through life, in which men are notified beforehand, as soon as we take our place among them, that they shall care for our welfare as they care for their own. God so prizes and exalts our nature, that he commands the world to do it service.

II. The principle of the text does more: it augments the value of man in all the powers of his nature.

It does so from its very nature. Disinterestedness is the prime element of manhood. It is the fine gold of human character the sole essence of moral value. Selfishness is deterioration and debasement, the mere dross of human nature. Short-sighted in view, and limited in its range of vision, it sees all objects out of their true relation, and reversed in their proper value. What God exalts and prizes, selfishness lowers and degrades. What God despises and contemns, selfishness exalts and prizes. It contradicts the unerring Judgment of God, and so blind and obstinate is it, that rather than see in the light which he has kindled it, will either bandage or dig out the eyes of the soul. Disinterestedness is that single eye which fills the whole body with light. It sees all things in their true relations, and according to their proper value. It draws the line of demarcation between good men and bad men. It fixes the great gulf between heaven and hell. It marks the eternal distinction between the Son of God and the great adversary of men. It forms the splendor of redemption and the glory of all the attributes of God. Substitute selfishness in its place, and there is no virtue, no heaven, no Saviour, no God. It is, in fine, the great moral force of the universe, giving motion and direction, power and value to every good-willing being. He who surrenders himself intelligently and voluntarily to this great principle lifts his whole nature at once and forever. He no longer needs particular rules and detailed prescriptions. He is a law unto himself, obeying all laws in one, without feeling subjection to any; a freeman of the universe, admitted into fellowship with all goodness. Placed within the sphere of his invisible relations, under those

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… …mutuality that rises into oneness, pure
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… …state. Unlike the folly of selfishness, which
… …humanity, and which has labored for centuries to
… …ties of society meet in a single point, it first
… …and thus solves the social problem. And here
… …philanthropy is so much at fault. Its
… …go no farther than the mere outward condition,
… …and intellectual progress. It would satisfy
… …him with a new bed or better habita-
… …the face of equal rights or popular liberty.
… …and important as is their value,
… …entirely uncared for. Man does not live
… …or by liberty alone. What God
… …else you might as easily stay
… …the pangs of conscience with a loaf.
… …you make him a contented animal.
… …and faculties, and you make him a
… …satisfy his intellect,
… …But satisfy his moral

nature, and you make him a man—a man too, in the full use of all his faculties, and enriched with untold treasures of truth and right. For this, nothing is equal but the divine principle of the text. Before its quickening energy every evil in society however vast, ponderous, and discouraging, will in the end entirely disappear.

It will revolutionize the whole system of business relations which now keeps down and retards the moral progress of man. It will solve that deepest of all questions, the relations of the employer and employed. Trade, commerce, labour, with their multiplied fruits, will not inure only to the benefit of the few. The high moral claims of the mass, now overborne or set at nought by skill, capital, and position, will no longer be ignored or stinted in the ordinary measure of justice. Private interest will no longer countervail the general interests of humanity. The benign operation of benevolence will harmonize every antagonism. Moral interests will be elevated in value above the material interests of labour. Man will be prized above a bale of cotton or a ton of coal. It will bend the system to the rights and interests of each rather than bend man under the pressure of an unequal system. The world then will learn how much humanity has been kept back in its progress by the operation of this sad and single inequality. The subject only admits of an allusion. To discuss it would require volumes. Again, it would lift the veil of ignorance from the face of the nations. This evil is closely allied to the former. A system of labour which requires a constant battle for the common necessaries of life leaves but little leisure for the cultivation of the intellect or of morals. A general waste of mind comes as a consequence from the general waste of time and strength. The reflection is one of the most depressing that can weigh upon the heart of a good man, that so fearful an amount of mind is suffered to run to waste in the laborious acquisition of a wealth that never flows into the channel of benevolence, and that leads to little or no substantial benefit to the vast interests of humanity. Man employs his wealth to pour darkness on the pathway of man. Man harnesses man to his car of gain, and the only reward bestowed is the crust that he eats, or the rough garment he wears. His mind, his improvable, immortal mind, is so seldom the object of thought, that its existence almost passes without recognition. Benevolence would adjust all this. It would lead to the instruction and improvement of the ignorant. It would invite the weak to lean on the arm of the strong. It will make man feel the degradation of man as he feels his own degradation. Again, it will destroy the blinding and degrading evil of party spirit. When men are swayed by its influence, and not by their own independent judgment, it is one of the most certain means of degradation. Like

the heated wind from the desert, party spirit withers and scorches all that is genial and just, humane and honorable, amongst men, and when it sweeps with its accustomed violence through a nation, it often prostrates manhood and principle, and worth and character and talent in its course of ruin. Few things utter so severe a reproach against the intelligence and self-respect of a nation as the silent submission to such perilous visitations. A great people in the spasm of a universal excitement, raised by the profligate and the vile to exalt one of their number to a position he can never fill, is a sight humiliating in the extreme. The honorable loss of a nation's independence could not be more vitiating in its influence. The principle of the text is a sufficient remedy. Governments never reform morals. That is the work of religion only. Influence men by its heaven-born spirit, and how speedily will they refuse to be borne along by the fiery tempest. Let the good favour and promote the good, and soon, like other reforms that spring from religious principle, a government will arise as calm and self-respectful in dignity as strong in peace and stability, and man, instead of seeking to degrade or dishonor his kind, will seek to advance him to dignity and honour.

The same spirit will revolutionize the administration of governments. Governments, more than any other institutions of earth, are founded for the mutual good of its members. And were they administered with only a moderate regard to the welfare of man, they would prove the highest of our earthly blessings. But hitherto it seems to have been the design of the great men and rulers of the world to maintain such a state of things as would keep men in the lowest state of development. They seem to have been influenced by the fear that to trust the masses with their just and appropriate rights would render them difficult to govern. Man has, on this account, been curtailed in his rights and in the use of those means which God has provided for the perfection of his manhood. The moral forces of society have been so employed as to deprive them of their natural energy. The best good of man—his highest social and intellectual and moral welfare—have been set aside for lesser and inferior objects. The great, elevating principle of the Bible has been thus far wholly unrecognized. Could it be brought to bear in its influence on our civil life, a transformation more wonderful than the world has ever witnessed would appear in every act and every measure. Equality of rights and privileges would be enjoyed without question or controversy. Justice and equity would inspire every heart, and give vigour to every hand. That fearful antagonism which now jars and jostles the great machinery of government, and which often destroys nations in its collisions, will settle down more speedily than if the combined wisdom and talent of the world were employed for their

removal. Governments would become families, and nations brotherhoods; moral influence and moral principle be more valued than material interests, and material interests increased in a thousandfold proportion. Let the influence of this benign principle control but a few of the common aspects of society—let it enter the common employments of life, guide the ways of business, regulate the pursuit of wealth, make property a means of beneficence instead of private enjoyment, wield power for the weal and not for the woe of man, and the scenes that now sadden the well-wishers of the race will change into scenes of delight and beauty. Society itself would bud and blossom, and fill the face of the world with fruit. Corrupt governments would sink; the thrones whose worm-eaten pillars now tremble at the popular breath would fall, never again to be re-established; the madness and corruption of party spirit be known only in the abhorrence of history; rebellion, that whirlwind of Satan, treason, that breathing-hole of the pit, find no place for their revels but in the domains of the lost.

The same spirit will overturn all false systems of religion. The clear, strong light of manly principle will bring to naught every doctrine and form and notion and service that comes in conflict with the best good of man. Benevolence, and not selfish principle, love, and not fear, will form the self-convicting test of all religion. Superstition, formality, religious pride, and heartless ceremony will appear in their natural incompatibility with truth and right. Sincerity and fervor, truth and zeal, heartfulness and trusting affection will form the badge of true discipleship. In honor one will prefer another; in love one will serve another, and thus the whole body will be firmly compacted by every fitting joint and ligament.

IV. Disobedience to the principle of the text is opposition to the real welfare of humanity.

For if the value of man, if his augmentation and improvement, if the removal of those evils that impede his advancement, are all dependent on the practical manifestation of this spirit, what, it may well be asked, is the just inference to be drawn from the exhibition of the opposite spirit? Certainly it is not that selfish principle is innocent or venial, or that it injures no one but its guilty subject, or that it extends no farther than to the narrow sphere in which it operates; but that it is in effect and reality that opposing influence that tends to swell the universal tide of wrong, to restrain and hold back the universal advancement of man, to support and perpetuate the universal reign of evil—in a word, to place the whole welfare of man and the vast interests of God's kingdom on the descending plane of degradation and ruin. It is morally certain that if all men were to act on the reversed principle of this divine law, and instead of God's reading, read it according to their common views and common practice—let every

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...rinciple of human nature, as it is
...'s law. War will not cease its
... lift its heavy hand, restless dissatis-
..., distressful revolution, governmental
... pregnant cause of all shall die before
... ward, but inward—in the heart and
... condition. Leave man's heart un-
...ken influence of the selfish principle,
... ever occur, to be re-enacted for the same
... on his fellow, and the entire race be left
... and fruitless round, without attaining the ob-
... and blessed One has gifted him with ex-
... been man's foolish course. It may con-
... But longer or shorter, the miseries of
... direct product of his disobedience to the benevo-
... who voluntarily, causelessly disobey it,
... connection to the well-being of humanity at
... themselves accessories to the evils which they
...
... Christ is the only source of hope for the uni-
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... is founded on the principle of benevo-
... spirit; and its great design is to
... world. Outside of the Church of Christ
... regards man as man, or that attempts
... There, and there only, man is
... and proper worth, and according
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... moral and moral. There,
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the black and the white, meet on a common ground; one in humanity, in rights, in privileges, and in common destiny. There all have one common home, one common Saviour, one common God and Father. There is neither Jew there, nor Greek there; there is neither barbarian nor Scythian there; neither bond nor free there; but all fellow-citizens of the saints and of the household of God, bound together in one high, living, and enduring relationship.

This is the true and literal character of the Church of Christ. There may be those within its sacred fold who carry there the principles of the world with them; but they are not allowed there. There may be churches in name that deny the great fundamental principles of the Gospel; but they are not the churches of Christ. There may be imperfections, wrongs, and even oppression in some of its branches; but they exist there under the condemnation of its Supreme Head. In comparison with the divine principle no other doctrine, form, ceremony, service, or mode of discipline is of any account. Let it be apostolic or non-apostolic, orthodox or heterodox, glowing with zeal, or frozen in torpidity, it is all accounted as nothing, as the sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. This underlies and gives value to all—its animating principle, its moving power, its crowning glory. Otherwise it is the body without the spirit. Were this single influence what it might easily be, and what it should be, it would not be long before men would enjoy their dearest rights, and be raised to their highest state of development. And what is demanded for this but the full practical recognition of its power in every branch and in every section of the professed Church of Christ? Let it once sway its membership, and how soon would heart flow into heart, and that scene of universal peace and charity foretold by the prophet open upon the rejoicing vision of all? Self-seeking would fly from her boundaries, the covetous man and the extortioner be at once excluded from Christian intercourse and fellowship,—union and concord cement the true friends of the Redeemer and of man,—unessential and divisive differences die under the concentrated rays of light and love, and man, the well-being of universal man, be the moving spring of Christian energy. The blessed influence of the church would extend to the wider field of the world; social evils would be removed or reformed; the measures and aims of civil government all run in the pure channels of wisdom and rectitude; humanity displace outrage and oppression; the social state be controlled by the upright and the honorable, and all men form a common bulwark of right and justice, and one joy in the welfare of another, and each in the welfare of the whole. Then will the Church of Christ become that colossal man, complete in every member, and well-developed in every part, informed with divine intelligence, moved by a divine influence; and without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, prove itself the body of Him *whose fulness filleth all in all.*

SERMON XVI.*

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GOD'S MOST REASONABLE DEMAND PRESSED UPON THE SINNER.

"My son, give me thine heart."—PROVERBS XXIII. 26.

IT is a plea often offered by impenitent men for their neglect of religion, that there are mysteries in it which they can not fathom. Be it so, that there are mysteries beyond the comprehension of Gabriel; there are truths and commands which a child can understand and a child may obey. And while the salvation of the soul does not depend on an understanding of the one, it does on an obedience to the other. What command more simple and intelligible than this: "My son, give me thine heart?" And yet a compliance with it is the sum of all true religion, and secures salvation. In behalf of God, and for your own sakes, I urge it upon you, my impenitent hearers. God says to you, in infinite tenderness and majesty: "My son, give me thine heart." I would show what is meant by giving God the heart, and notice a few things which are implied in this demand.

I have asked, What is more simple and intelligible? Let this be the command of a parent to a rebellious child, and no one would think of asking for an explanation. But as the command of God to the sinner, many have veiled it in mystery, supposing the heart to be something over which the individual has no control; and hence we find many saying, "I would give God my heart if I could," as though the heart was something distinct from the desire, the choice, the purpose of the man. The term heart, as used in relation to the moral man, is a metaphor drawn from the seat of animal life; that delicate organ through which the blood flows, and which imparts action to the system. And it is a metaphor which most forcibly presents the preference of the soul, the choice, the disposition, the act of the will, which constitutes moral character. Now, to give God the heart is nothing more nor less than to place on him the affections; or, in more intelligible language, to love him. Thus, one individual gives to another his heart when he becomes sincerely and deeply attached to him; and thus man gives God his heart, when he truly says: "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I desire besides thee." This, surely, all can understand. This, all may feel.

* Preached in a time of a great revival.

I proceed to notice a few things relative to yourself, my impenitent hearer, clearly implied in this demand.

I. It is implied in this demand that, from the earliest moments of your being, you have withheld from God your heart.

God would not demand of you what you had already surrendered to him. He would not say to Gabriel: "My son, give me thine heart." If he should, Gabriel might ask in reply, "Lord, why dost thou make this demand? Thou knowest that my heart is and ever has been thine; thou knowest that I love thee." Let God make this demand of Satan, and there is a meaning and a force in it; for Satan is a rebel, and has for ages turned away his heart from God. And this demand made of you shows where you are; that your heart in like manner is alienated from God, and placed upon some other, some unhallowed object.

Do you deny this? Then why does God make the demand? Do you ask for evidence of it? What evidence would satisfy you that a child had become alienated from its parent? what other than this, that it had ceased to think of him; that when it did think of him, the thought was painful; that it fled from his presence, sought no intercourse, refused to read his letters, trifled with his name, and disobeyed his commandments? Is not all this true of you? Let conscience answer. Let the record of your life testify. Consult the Bible and see what, from the beginning, has been the character of the race to whieh you belong. What did God say of the antediluvian world, and why did he destroy that world? What was his complaint against his own people? "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." What said Jeremiah of the natural heart? It is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." What said Paul of the carnal mind? It is "enmity with God." Are you an exception—one out of the millions of the human family who does not withhold his affections from God? If so, why then have you not perfectly obeyed him? As a transgressor of his law, the evidence is complete against you. And yet I fear it is the last proposition to which you will assent. Amid all the ravings of rebellion, and while tossing on the billows of the fiery gulf, you will deny that you are a rebel, or, at least, that you are voluntary in your alienation, and will persist in affirming that you would love God if you could. I pray that the Holy Spirit may now fasten conviction of this great truth on your mind, that God shall not speak in vain.

II. It is implied in this demand that God has a right to your heart.

Wicked men often claim what is not their own, and we are not surprised. But does a righteous man present a claim, we feel that

it is lawfully his. But can God trespass upon another's? What is another's? What are we? What are any? What have we all, that we have not received?

God, sinner, has a right to your heart for what he is in himself. Do you ask why, and what is God? All that is excellent and glorious; the King eternal, immortal, invisible, before whom cherubim and seraphim cast their crowns, crying: "Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God Almighty, the whole earth is full of his glory."

But more. God has a right to your heart from what he has done for you. Look at yourself, your wonderful frame, your physical and moral capacities, your immortal mind. Look around you and above you, at the world you inhabit, at all its conveniences and wonders, at the firmament over you, the light, the air, the ten thousand productions in the animal and vegetable kingdoms—all made for you, and all claiming your adoration and love.

God has a right to your heart for his patience and forbearance towards you. Think, for a moment, how many years you have withheld from him the tribute of your affections; how you have trampled under foot his authority and abused his grace; how you have cast off fear and restrained prayer; how you have neglected his word and violated his Sabbaths; how you have abused his mercies to sin; and how, when for every transgression he might justly have cut you off in his anger, he has permitted you to live, and not only to live, but has loaded you with mercies. And does he deserve no grateful return? Deny it, if you can. But another and higher thought. God has given his Son, his only begotten and beloved Son, to die for you; has opened for you the way of life, that you may escape from death, and has stooped from his eternal throne to enter into covenant with you, that neither life nor death, principalities nor powers, things present nor things to come, shall separate you from his love. Oh! riches of grace! Mercies inexhaustible!

But if I must give my heart to supreme excellence, or bestow my affection on him who has done most for me, my liberty is abridged; "I am not mine own master; another has dominion over me."

But what if you should bestow it upon one who has no rightful claim—would you have more freedom? Would not another be your master; even one whose wages would be death? Oh! boasted liberty! the liberty of descending to death and hell.

III. It is implied in the demand of the text that you can give God your heart. Just as much as that you have a heart, or that God speaks, or that you are his son. On any other supposition than this, the whole exhortation would be without meaning; would be taunting irony. Nor on any other would there be duty incum-

bent on you, as duty is measured by the command of God and ability to obey.

"But my ability to do a right thing was lost in the fall."

What constitutes an ability to do a right thing, but an understanding, a power to know God, to know his revealed will, the rule of your duty with all its reasonableness; a conscience, a moral sense, a discernment of right and wrong; a power of choice, of preference of one course over another? Are not these all yours—yours in the very highest degree? Deny it, if you can. Your own mouth would condemn you.

"But all inclination for the love of God is departed!" Very true; and this is the reason why God says: "My son, give me thine heart." But inclination is something very different from capacity. Suppose a man has capacity, but no inclination to obey the laws of the land. What then? Is he under no obligations to obey them? May he plead his inclination to do wrong as an excuse for doing wrong? Was not this the very point for which the prophet so sharply rebuked the Jews when he said: "Will ye steal and murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?"

"But how can I love God when my mind is carnal, at enmity with him. I would if I could, but I can not. The divine Saviour says I can not, except the Father draws me."

But, my friend, the Saviour does not say you can not if the Father draws you. And if you can come and love God, and obey the Saviour when the Father draws you, then you have all the powers of moral ageney; the very point I am arguing. And does not the Father draw you? Has he not been doing it all your days, and have you not been continually pulling away the shoulder, and saying, The world shall be my portion? And now will you look up and say, I can not give God my heart?

Perhaps, however, you have no clear views of what is actually required of you. It is not that you should do something which you would be glad to do, but can not; as you would be glad to relieve a person in distress, but have no ability or means; or would be glad to redeem a soul from hell, but can give no ransom. God says: "My son, give me thine heart." And what does he mean by this? Precisely the same as if he had said: "My son, love me. My daughter, love me. To me consecrate yourself for time and eternity." That is all. And now do you say: "I can not love God; can not consecrate myself to him?" Why? What evil hath he done? What is there in his character or service repulsive to your feelings? Do you say: "Nothing; the evil lies,

all lies, in the wickedness of my heart itself?" Oh! then, as you freely confess it, so repent of it, mourn over it; cast yourself down before a forsaken God; tell him what a wretch you have been; implore forgiveness through the blood of his Son, with the aids of his Holy Spirit, to work in you a better temper. For thus saith the Lord: "Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby you have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit. Turn you at my reproof. Behold, I pour out my Spirit upon you." Do what you can, and what you should, and live.

IV. It is implied in this demand, that God is now ready to receive you.

There is one abuse of the truth which I have just presented, peculiar to the deceitful heart. Perhaps already, my still impenitent hearer, you have been guilty of it. You may have said to yourself: "Well, if it is so that I can give God my heart at any moment, when I please, I will delay it for the present. The world may yet longer be my idol. If my heart is his before I die, that will be sufficient." Is it so? Let me remind you of that solemn passage: "Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer. They shall seek me early, and shall not find me. For that they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would none of my counsel. They despised all my reproof." Esau sold his birthright, but he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. You can at any time give your heart to God, and therefore you ought to do it at this moment of time; but it is also true that you are so depraved, so alienated from God, so under the power of your own pride and self-gratification, that you never will do it without the grace of God to subdue you; and the least delay, under the circumstances under which you are placed, may lead him for ever to give you to the power of your corruptions. Through the death of his Son, God is now ready, and I venture to say my text warrants it, to receive you. Without an atonement there could be no reconciliation. Never, no, never, could rebel man approach his Creator. To all the wicked God would for ever be a consuming fire. But lo! he has had compassion. "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whoso believeth in him should not perish, but might have everlasting life." God may now be just, just to himself, just to his law and all holy beings, and yet justify him that believeth in Jesus. And therefore he says: "My son, give me thine heart." "Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning, and turn to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, and of great kindness." Yea, like the father of the repenting prodigal, he will run and meet you. It is no light thing, sinner, that God is now ready

to receive you. All has been purchased by heaven's greatest, choicest gift. But though all things are now ready, soon the door will be shut—soon the day of mercy will be clean gone forever. Do I say that death will be the boundary beyond which God will be irreconcilable? Ah! It may lie far this side of that. "O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate." The day of merciful visitation soon passes.

"While God invites, how blessed the day,
How sweet the Gospel's charming sound;
Come, sinners, haste, O haste away
While yet a pardoning God he's found."

Shall I not add, then,

Fifthly, That it is implied in the demand and in all the considerations which I have placed before you, that you are called to make an immediate surrender.

"What! While I am in this house, sitting on these seats, hear this sermon?"

Yes; for if God has a right to your heart, he has a right to it now. If you can ever render it, you should render it now. If this is the moment in which he is ready to receive you, this should be the moment of your return.

"But I did not expect to do it when I came into this house."

And, said a young man, thrown from a horse, and suddenly hurried into eternity; "I did not expect to die to-day." But he was called to. And how much better unexpectedly become a Christian, than unexpectedly die and perish forever.

"But I do not know about submitting to God so suddenly. I must have time. Conversion is not a hasty but a gradual work."

How much time do you want? How much have you had? How long has God called and you refused—stretched out his hand and you have not regarded? What if you were sailing swift down Niagara's flood; would you ask for time to turn? What if your house was wrapped in flames, would you talk of a gradual escape? What do you mean by a gradual conversion? Can a man gradually stop fighting? fire a few more guns as the war is over? gradually exchange his enmity to love? oppose God to-day, only not so violently as yesterday, and with less and less bitterness as time rolls on? What would become of the soul, he dying in the process? Whose would it be, God's or Satan's? Sinner! God now commands you to repent. As the Roman ambassadors drew a circle around the captive princes and bid them them accede to their terms before they had passed its bounds, so God now requires an immediate accession to his overtures of mercy.

Perhaps you say: "I have tried often and often to give my heart to God and been unable."

And how have you tried? Just as a man has tried to serve two masters. You have tried to give up your heart to God, while you have continued to give it to the world. Your partner, or child, or house, or gold, or honor, has been your idol, or you have cloven to some forbidden sin and refused to cut off the right hand, or to pluck out the right eye. No wonder you have failed; and try in this way you may forever, and at last make your bed in hell. How will your heart ever fasten upon God, until you renounce every other object of affection?

"But I have no conviction and no realization of my entire alienafrom God, and how without that can I yield myself to him alive from the dead?"

No conviction! No realization! Can you lay your hand on your heart and say this? Are you not struggling this moment against convictions more distressing than you can bear; laboring to conceal it from a scrutinizing world; more willing to have it said that your heart is so hard, so unbelieving, that all that God can do, all the blood and sufferings of Christ, and the very prospect of an eternal destruction has no effect upon you, than that you are under conviction and alarmed at your state; rather be called a stupid, hardened atheist and infidel than an anxious, inquiring sinner? What will you think of this pride when your flesh and your body are consumed—of this careful concealment of your true character and these resistances of the Spirit of God? O my still impenitent hearer, God once more says to you in infinite kindness and compassion—"My son, give me thine heart." Refuse, and how shall you escape his wrath and curse? Do what you will; be moral in your life, sober in your conversation, chaste in your thoughts, honest in your intercourse with your fellow men, regular in your attendance on the forms of religion, give all your goods to feed the poor, and your body to be burned, without love you cannot enter heaven. Never, no, never, can you praise and enjoy God; never stand in the "light of his countenance." Hell must be your abode; weeping and wailing your potrion.

"But God is merciful."

True; and therefore you are spared, and God is saying—"My son, give me thine heart." For though all your sins were blotted out, without love you could not live in heaven. You could not dwell a moment there while withholding yourself from him that that sitteth on the throne. Here you have happiness in the objects around you; in acquiring wealth; in moving, perhaps, in a wide circle of friends; in the gratification of appetite; in the pride of life. But in death, the world, with all that is gratifying to a wicked man,

passes away. Riches he must leave behind; sensual pleasures come to an end; honor, pomp, pride perish in the dust. So the rich man found it. He had withheld his heart from God, and rioted in the bounties of his providence. But he died, and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, without one drop of water to cool his tongue tormented in the flame. Thus was it with him; and you are now to decide whether thus it shall be with you. Are you aged, with one foot in the grave, within sound of the groans of the lost; how precious the moment! Are you young, in the spring season of life, unhardened, uncommitted to an eternal alienation, within the precious promise: "I love them that love me; and they that seek me early shall find me." Unto you, O man, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men. Hark! I seem to hear you say:

"Weary of this war within,
Weary of this endless strife;
Weary of myself and sin,
Weary of a wretched life;

"Burdened with a world of grief,
Burdened with a sinful load;
Burdened with my unbelief,
Burdened with the wrath of God;

"Lo, I come to thee for ease,
Jesus, gracious as thou art;
Now my weary soul release,
Write forgiveness on my heart."
Father, I have sinned, etc.

"Now, Lord, I would be thine alone,
Come, take possession of thine own,
For thou hast set me free;
Released from Satan's hard command,
See all my powers in waiting stand
To be employed by thee."

And is it so? May I leave you reconciled to God? O to grace how great a debtor. "I say unto you there is joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Oh, the wonders of redeeming love! Oh, the triumphs of the Cross over sin and hell. Give your heart, your all to God, and be blessed for ever.

"Sing, ye redeemed of the Lord,
Your great deliverer sing;
Pilgrims for Zion's city bound,
Be joyful in your King.

"A hand divine shall lead you on
Through all the blissful road
Till to the sacred mount you rise
To see your smiling God."

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

The Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting.

THIS consecrated spot continues the home of prayer, the house of prayer, the place where it would seem God delights to hear and answer the petitions of his praying ones. Here the citizen, the stranger, the merchant, and business-man from a distance, the soldier and officer from the army or navy, the sailor and sea-captain from their ocean voyages, come with warm hearts and deep emotion, to tell how God has heard their prayers, and what he has done for their souls.

At a recent meeting a young soldier arose to speak. His words were few, but his heart seemed full. "He had come to thank God publicly," he said, "for his goodness." A short time since he asked the prayers of the meeting, that he might be kept while away in camp. Those prayers had been answered. God had kept him, and he was here to give the glory to Him.

"I have come again," said an aged sea-captain in the meeting, "to tell once more the same old story. Surely I can say, I rejoice in God, the Rock of my salvation. It is now four years and eight months since I was born into the kingdom of God's dear Son: 'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.' This verse," he adds, "and particularly the latter clause, just suits my case exactly. I rejoice that I was born a second time. Like the woman of Samaria who left her water-pot and went into the city to tell the people of Christ—so must I say I will leave all to sing the praises of the Lord. I am now sixty-three years old. But since I was born the last time I have rejoiced each day in the Rock of my salvation."

Prayers having been requested for the conversion of two brothers on the battle field; the speedy conversion of a woman sick and near to death; and for the blessing of God to rest on a Sabbath School in New Jersey, an army chaplain led in prayer, remembering these with much earnestness. He prayed for the wounded on the battle field; the sick in hospitals and camps; the poor wandering colored people in our city, many of whom were God's believing, humble children, who were cast out and homeless; and he prayed with great fervor for our distracted country—that the God of battles would guide our generals in the field, and that the Gospel of Christ would go forth with our armies.

On another occasion, one who had been converted through the influence of the meetings arose to speak. It was about a year and a half since he had sought his happiness at the foot of the cross—and here he found it truly. He added: "I always expect to be happy, because I always intend to do the will of God." He had spent some time of late in Convalescent Camp, Virginia. He found there a great outpouring of God's Spirit. He had seen in the many meetings

held there from day today, some thirty, forty, and fifty gathered around the altar, at a time, for prayers. He found a noble work going on there under the auspices of the Christian Commission. They had built a large chapel, but it was not sufficient to accommodate all who would attend. The soldiers gathered together in multitudes, morning, noon, and night, for prayer; and long after the evening services were closed, they would go out into the woods and pray for hours evening after evening; and as he listened he could hear the frequent shouts of "Glory to God." There are many Christians there who are laboring to win souls to Christ. But it is a great work to carry on these meetings from week to week. Pray that God's Spirit may constantly descend and bless these efforts in behalf of the soldiers.

For the Prayer Meeting.

A Sabbathless World.

How dreary and death-like would the world become without a Sabbath! Its workshops would resemble the wards of some mighty hospital, tenanted by the pining victims of intense toil. Manhood would, in one or two generations, lose all its characteristic strength; youth would be smitten with a fatal blight, ere it had half attained its growth; and hale old age would become a prodigy to be wondered at in the land.

"Yokefellows! think how the abstraction of the Sabbath would hoplessly enslave the working classes with whom we are identified Think of labor thus going on in one monotonous and eternal cycle—the limbs forever on the rack—the fingers forever plying, the eyeballs forever straining—the brow forever sweating—the feet forever plodding—the brain forever throbbing—the shoulders for ever drooping—the loins forever aching—and the restless mind forever scheming. Think, as your imagination beholds the unvarying wheel of work, the treadmill of labor thus going round and round and round, without a change, without a pause; from morn to night, and from year to year—think, if you can, of the desolations that must follow this absolute reign of labor over the whole realm of time. Think of the beauty it would efface, of the merry-heartedness it would extinguish, of the giant-strengths that it would tame, of the resources of nature that it would exhaust, of the aspirations it would crush, of the sicknesses that it would breed, of the projects it would wreck, of the groans that it would extort, of the lives that it would immolate; and of the cheerless graves that it would prematurely dig! See them toiling and moiling, sweating and fretting, grinding and hewing, weaving and spinning, strewing and gathering, sowing and reaping, razing and building, digging and planting, unlading and storing, striving and struggling; in the garden and in the field, in the granary and in the barn, in the factory and in the mill, in the warehouse and in the shop, on the mountain and in the ditch, on the roadside and in the wood, in the city and in the country, on the sea and on the shore, on the earth and

in the earth; in days of brightness and days of gloom; in hours of sun and seasons of storm; in times of trouble and times of peace; in the heights of day and in the depths of night; through the savageness of winter and through the gentleness of spring; in the energy of youth and in the impotence of age, when health is dancing in the blood, and when disease is eating up the strength, when death is in the lonely home, and when happy life encircleth the hearth —thus the wheel of labor would go round with the earth, and the children of industry chained to its surface must follow its ruinous circumvolutions till, exhausted by unnatural efforts, they relax their hold, drop off, and suddenly disappear.

"The worn-out wayfarer, finding no verdant resting-place, and no house of entertainment to cheer him in his travel, must sink at length on the roadside, and miserably perish. The delicate and the fragile would be speedily 'crushed,' by such a doom, 'before the moth.' Feeble constitutions, that with a seventh day's fostering care, might eke out their residue of strength for many years, would be broken down with a sudden crash. Incipient diseases, which nature, invigorated by adequated rest, might overgrow, would be developed with a deadly rapidity. An intense labor would be found a dreadful forcer of the seeds and rudiments of decay, which are embedded more or less plentifully, in all of us. Under the vassalage of such a gigantic oppressor as unrestricted labor, earth would reek with the sufferings of her offspring; whilst the all-absorbing prayer of her millions would be for 'Rest! Rest! Rest!' or the quiet slumber of the grave!"

For the Prayer Meeting.

Grace in a Gradual Revelation.

THERE is another point in which you may see God's grace in the revelation of this plan of salvation —the way in which he revealed it in primitive times in types and symbols. Now, if you were to come into the schoolroom of this chapel when the day-school is in operation, you might find the teachers giving "object lessons" —taking objects, and from those visible objects drawing out all sorts of lessons for the children. When you want to teach children you don't often make use of abstractions, but you get pictures. You can't get on well with children without appealing to their senses. You get pictures and diagrams, and that is a very wise way of teaching. Now, have you never thought what the use of the Book of Leviticus is? It is God Almighty's object lesson of the Gospel. It is God Almighty teaching there by pictures. The very same things that are taught you in plainer truths, are taught there in symbols, and in visible forms: and mind you, I don't think there ever was an age of the world in which that Book of Leviticus was of more importance than it is to-day. You have to day a great many men who would like to have a gospel without a cross—who would like to have a gospel without an altar —who would like to have a gos-

pel minus an atonement. They will say very fine things about Christ being a pattern — about Christ living divinely and dying divinely, as a sort of ensample for you ; but while they would keep the cross of Christ as a sort of trophy, they would not keep the cross of Christ as the altar upon which atonement was made. I will tell you what is one of the best refutations of the theory of these men who garble the Scriptures in these times, that old Book of Leviticus. I will defy any man, holding that modern principle of what is called "Negative Theology," to make common sense of the Mosaic institute. What did God mean when he ordained that remarkable set of institutions? Here you have lambs slaughtered by thousands, a costly institute. Do you think that God wanted his priests to be butchers, and his temple to be a shamble? Do you think that he wanted the blood of bullocks and of goats? What does it all mean? If every lamb were not a picture of that true Lamb, if every priest were not a type of that true Priest, if that whole temple service did not relate to the Gospel, and if every part of it did not point to Calvary, what sense can you find in it at all? I will defy any man with those common and popular notions to make common sense at all of that old Mosaic institution; so that today it is just as important as it was in old time. It is God Almighty's own picture-lesson, in which the Gospel is set up in pictures for every body to see it.

For the Prayer-Meeting.

Neglecting Salvation.

SUPPOSE that there had been, during the time of the great fire at Moscow, when that city was burnt down, some miserly wretch up at the top storey of sometall house; and there that miser is looking over his ledgers. There is great trouble in the town, but all he cares about is his ledgers and his gold bags that he has got about him. It is a miserable-looking room up there, but there is a good deal of gold in it for all that. He has got his gold bags and his wealth about him, and his precious goods are stored in all sorts of crannies in that room. While that old man is up there with his gold bags and his ledgers, an alarm has begun to resound through the streets— "Fire! fire! fire!" and the alarm bells are ringing in all directions, and everybody is trying to escape; but that old man never listens to the alarm bells—he is too busy calculating his profits; he is too busy with his books and his bags, and he never listens to the alarm. Everybody is running but that old man, and there is he busy with his gold; and while he is counting his cash the fire takes hold of the very staircase of his house, and it is creeping up the stairs from chamber to chamber, till at last it is burning the very joists of the floor on which he stands, and by-and-by crash goes the very floor, and in he sinks to a burning, fiery tomb. You see he neglected the alarm. Ah! that is very like the worldling. We go and tell him of danger, and we tell him of salvation. You know if you go and stand by a blacksmith's smithy and you talk

to him; he is so busy with the sound of his hammers that he can't hear what you say, and he keeps on hammering in spite of all your remarks, and does not hear a word. So it is with the busy worldling. He is so hard at work with the toils of life, and his heart is so set on the things of the world that, say what you will, he never listens to you, and it is as if he never heard you. Why, there are many men that have been surrounded by Gospel teaching for I can't tell how many years, and they are as blind and as dark as if they never heard it. Busy with the din of their worldliness about them, they never seemed to hear the message. They neglected the great salvation. They did not deny it; they did not say that there was not a salvation; they did not say they would not be saved; but they just left the matter alone—they neglected it. Now, if you neglect this great salvation, you will perish.

For the Prayer-Meeting.

Lessons of the Grave.

O GRAVE! how many sighs hast thou drawn from the hearts, how many tears from the eyes of those who have been thy visitors! But these sighs and tears were for the good of mortals. "By the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." Many are those who, when they have sat beneath the cypress or willow that waved over the grave of a friend, have vowed to prepare for the eventful hour of death. There is something in the sighing of the winds that moan over, and in the rustling of the grass that waves round the tomb, which speaks to the hearts of the living, and brings to memory every dearly-cherished look and action of our departed associates. The solemnity which they inspire carries us back into the past, to the hour when they left cares and pains for happiness and glory—dying mortals, for God and angels; and prompts us to emulate their virtuous examples, that we may share their glory. We do not wish that the gloomy countenance and tearful eye should always be the portion of mortals; but we would gladly see these signals of repenting sorrow upon the countenances of those who have hitherto been thoughtless and vain.

And if the future destiny of man cannot be learned from those places of the dead, we may well fear that human sympathy cannot be acted upon for the good of dying men. But a feeling is awakened in the Christian's heart, of a different character from that of sadness, when he beholds the devastations of the "King of Terrors," and looks upon the victims of his conquest. He fears not to meet this mighty conqueror. He knows that death and the grave cannot hold him captive. His Commander has "burst the bars of death, and triumphed o'er the grave," and all his followers will be equally victorious! The Christian KNOWS that when he is counted as dead—that when the storms of earth hasten to decay the monumental slab which is reared over his grave, that HE will not be there! His faith reaches beyond the tomb, to a glorious land whose inhabitants never die—a land where no graves shall be found—where the wail of the bereaved are heard no more,

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SERMON XVII.

BY REV. WILLIAM G. T. SHEDD, D.D.*

THE GUILT OF THE PAGAN.

"THEY are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind."—ROMANS i. 20, 21, 28.

UNLESS the guilt of the pagan world can be proved, the missionary enterprises of the Christian Church, from the days of the Apostles to the present time, have all been a waste of labor. Nay more, if the sin and ill-desert of the entire human race, in all its generations, cannot be established, then the Christian religion itself, involving the incarnation of God, is an attempt to supply a demand that has no real existence. Both theoretical and practical Christianity stands or falls with the doctrine of the universal guilt of man. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Apostle Paul, in the opening of the most systematic and logical treatise in the New Testament, the Epistle to the Romans, enters upon a line of argument to demonstrate the ill-desert of every human creature without exception, and to prove that before an unerring tribunal, and in the final day of adjudication, "every

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ergan's mind, and that, there-
he is "without excuse" for
needs some qualification. This
ctor, certainly does not possess
od as a Spirit, and of all his
er in Christendom. How then
fore the same eternal bar, and be
death, with the nominal Christian?
the Christian doctrine of one God, against
the popular mythologies, contend that the
with the new religion, in teaching that there
(Institutiones i. 5.) after quoting the Orphic
proof that the heathen poets taught the unity of
show that the better pagan philosophers, also,
Aristotle," he says, "although he disagrees with him-
self contradictory, yet testifies that one Supreme
, who is regarded as the wisest philosopher of
the doctrine of a Divine Monarchy, and deno-
ether, nor reason, nor nature, but, as he is *God*:
et and admirable world was made. And Cicero
ing, the Deity, and calls him the Supreme Being
deliro, (De test. an. c. 1; adv. Marc. i. 10;
whom no one of the Christian Fathers was more
sophizing of the schools, earnestly contends that
God is constitutional to the human mind. "God," he
, and the one only God, by the very fact that he
existence of any other deity than he would first
of the Jews is the one whom the *souls* of men
, the one whom you all naturally know, at whose
whose benefits ye rejoice. Will ye that we
witness of the soul itself, which, although con-
circumscribed by bad training, although
made the servant of false gods, yet when
slumber, as from some infirmity, and
God by *this* name only, because it
God,' 'good God,' and 'God grant.'
The soul also witnesses that he is its
God,' 'God shall recompense
that is, monotheistic.' Finally,
Roman Capitol but to heaven; for
Him and from thence it descend-
these statements in his eye, in the
been generally corrupted. It
God has been universally known
a multitude of deities, whenever
simply the name of God
with one God. And this
purpose wrote a book, *On the*
numerous testimonies, that the
the hearts of men. Tertul-
the common phraseology. But
their understandings, all their
to render them inexcusable."
Christian *Confession of Faith* (ch. i.)
works of creation and providence, do so
God, as to leave men inexcusable."

The answer is plain and decisive, and derivable out of the Apostle's own statements. In order to establish the guiltiness of a rational creature before the bar of God, it is not necessary to show that he has lived in the seventh heavens, and under a blaze of moral intelligence like that of the archangel Gabriel. It is only necessary to show that he has enjoyed some degree of moral light, and that he has not lived up to it. Any creature who knows more than he practices is a guilty creature. If the light in the pagan's intellect concerning God and the moral law, small though it be, is yet actually in advance of the inclination and affections of his heart, and the actions of his life, he deserves to be punished like any, and every other creature under the divine government, of whom the same thing is true. Grades of knowledge vary indefinitely. No two men upon the planet, no two men in Christendom itself, possess precisely the same degree of moral intelligence. There are men walking the streets of this city to-day, under the full light of the Christian revelation, whose notions respecting God and law are exceedingly dim and inadequate; and there are others whose views are clear and accurate in a high degree. But there is not a person in this city, young or old, ignorant or cultivated, in the purlieus of vice or in the saloons of wealth, whose knowledge of God is not in advance of his character. Ask the young thief in the subterranean haunts of vice and crime, if he does not know more of moral truth than he puts in practice, and if he renders an honest answer, it is in the affirmative. Ask the most besotted soul, immersed and petrified in pleasure, if his career upon earth has been in accordance with his own knowledge and conviction of what is right and required by his Maker, and he will answer no, if he answers truly. This is the condemnation, that light, in varying degrees it is true, but always, in some degree, falls upon the pathway of every man, but he loves darkness rather than light, because his heart and deeds are evil.

And this principle will be applied to the pagan world in the day of the great winding up of human history. It is so applied by St. Paul. He himself concedes that the Gentile has not enjoyed all the advantages of the Jew, and argues that the ungodly Jew will be visited with a more severe punishment than the ungodly Gentile. But he expressly affirms that the pagan is under law, and knows that he is; that he shows the work of the law that is written in his heart, his conscience also bearing witness, and his thoughts the meanwhile accusing him. (Rom. ii. 15.) But the knowledge of the law implies the knowledge of God in an equal degree. Who can feel himself amenable to a moral law, without at the same time thinking of its author? The law and the law-giver are indivisible. The one is the mirror and index of the other. If the eye opens dimly upon the commandment, it opens dimly upon the Sovereign; if it sees eternal right and law

with clear and celestial vision, it then looks directly into the face of God. Law and God are correlative to each other; and just so far, consequently, as the heathen understands the law that is written on the heart, does he apprehend the Being who sitteth upon the circle of the heavens, and who impinges himself upon the consciousness of man. This being so, it is plain that we can confront the ungodly pagan with the same charge of guilt before the eternal Judge with which we confront the ungodly nominal Christian. We can tell him with positiveness, wherever we find him—be it under the burning zone of Africa, or in the frozen home of the Esquimaux—that he knows more than he puts in practice. We will concede to him that the quantum of his moral knowledge is very stinted and meager; but in the same breath we will remind him that, small as it is, he has not lived up to it; that he too, has "come short;" that he, too, knowing God in the dimmest, faintest degree has yet not glorified Him, as God in the slightest, faintest manner. The Bible sends the ungodly and licentious pagan to hell upon the same principle that it sends the ungodly and licentious nominal Christian. It is the just principle enunciated by our Lord Christ, the judge of quick and dead, when he says: He who knew his master's will [clearly] and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; and he who knew not his master's will [clearly, but knew it dimly] and did it not, shall be beaten with few stripes." (Luke xii. 47, 48.)

The present and future condition of the heathen world is a subject that has enlisted the interest of two very different classes of men. The Church of God has pondered, and labored, and prayed over this subject, and will continue to do so till the millennium. And the disbeliever in revelation has also turned his mind to the consideration of this black mass of ignorance and misery, which welters upon the globe like a chaotic ocean; these teeming millions of barbarians and savages who render the aspect of the world so sad and so dark. The church, we need not say, have accepted the Biblical theory, and have traced the wretched condition of the pagan world, as St. Paul does to their sin andatns-r gression. They have held that every pagan is a rational creature, and by virtue of that fact has known something of the moral law; and that, to the extent of the knowledge he has had, he is as guilty for the transgression of law, and as really under its condemnation, as the dweller under the light of revelation and civilization. They have maintained that every human creature has enjoyed sufficient light, in the workings of natural reason and conscience, and in the impressions that are made by the glory and the terror of the natural world above and around him, to bring him in guilty before the Everlasting Judge. For this reason, the church has denied that the pagan is an innocent creature, or that he can stand in the judgment before the Searcher of hearts. For this reason, the

church has believed the declaration of the Apostle John, that "the whole world lieth in wickedness," (1 John v. 19.) and has endeavored to obey the command of him who came to redeem pagans as much as nominal Christians, to go and preach the Gospel to every creature, because every creature is a guilty creature.

But the disbeliever in revelation adopts the theory of human innocency, and looks upon all the ignorance and wretchedness of paganism as he does upon the suffering, decay, and death in the vegetable and animal world. It is the necessary condition, he asserts, of all created existence; and as decay and death in the vegetable and animal worlds only result in a more luxuriant vegetation, and an increased multiplication of living creatures, so the evils and woes of the hundreds of generations, and the millions of individuals, during the sixty centuries that have elapsed since the origin of man, will all of them minister to the ultimate and everlasting weal of the race. There is no need, therefore, he maintains, of endeavoring to save such feeble and ignorant beings from judicial condemnation and eternal penalty. Such finiteness and helplessness cannot be put into relation to such an awful attribute as the eternal nemises of God. Can it be, he asks, that the millions upon millions that have been born, lived their brief hour, enjoyed their little joys, and suffered their sharp sorrows, and then dropped into "the dark backward and abysm of time," have really been guilty creatures, and have gone down to an endless hell?

But what does all this reasoning and querying imply? Will the objector really take the position and stand to it, that the pagan man is not a rational and responsible creature? that he does not possess sufficient knowledge of moral truth, to justify his being brought to the bar of judgment? Will he say that the population that knew enough to build the pyramids did not know enough to break the law of God? Will he affirm that the civilization of Babylon and Nineveh, of Greece and Rome, did not contain within it enough of moral intelligence to constitute a foundation for future rewards and punishments? Will he tell us that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah stood upon the same plane with the brutes that perish, and the trees of the field that rot and die, having no idea of God, knowing nothing of the distinction between right and wrong, and never feeling the pains of an accusing conscience? Will he maintain that the populations of India, in the midst of whom one of the most subtle and ingenious systems of pantheism has sprung up with the luxuriance and involutions of one of their own jungles, and which has enervated the whole religious sentiment of the Hindoo race as opium has enervated their physical frame—will he maintain that such an untiring and persistent mental activity as this is incapable of apprehending the first principles of ethics and natural religion,

which in comparison with the complicated and obscure ratiocinations of Boodhism are clear as water, and lucid as atmospheric air? In other connections, this theorist does not speak in this style. In other connections, and for a different purpose, he enlarges upon the dignity of man, of every man, and eulogizes the power of reason which so exalts him in the scale of being. With Hamlet, he dilates in proud and swelling phrase: "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!" It is from that very class of theorizers who deny that the heathen are in danger of eternal perdition, and who represent the whole missionary enterprise as a work of supererogation, that we receive the most extravagant accounts of the natural powers and gifts of man. Now, if these powers and gifts do belong to human nature by its constitution, they certainly lay a foundation for responsibility; and all such theorists must be able to show that the pagan has made a right use of them, and has thought and acted in comformity with this large amount of truth and reason, with which, according to their own statement, he is endowed, or else they consign him, as St. Paul does, to "the wrath of God which is revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." If you assert that the pagan man has had no talents at all committed to him, and can prove your assertion, you are consistent in denying that he can be summoned to the bar of God, and be tried for everlasting life or death. But if you concede that he has had one talent, or two talents committed to his charge; and still more, if you exaggerate his gifts, and endow him with five or ten talents—then it is impossible for you to save him from the retributions to come, except you can prove a perfect administration and use of the trust.

II. And this brings us to the consideration of the second fact upon which St. Paul rests his position that the pagan world is in a state of condemnation. He concedes that man outside of the pale of revelation is characterized, not indeed by total, but by great ignorance of God and divine things? that his moral knowledge is exceedingly dim and highly distorted. But the fault is in himself that it is so. "As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind."

The question very naturally arises, and is frequently urged by the unbeliever: How comes it to pass that the knowledge of God, of which the Apostle speaks, and which he affirms to be innate and constiutional to the human mind, should become so vitiated in the pagan world? The majority of mankind are polytheists and idolaters, and have been for thousands of years. Can it be

that St. Paul is correct in affirming that the doctrine that there is only one God is native to the human mind—that the pagan "knows" this God, and yet does not glorify him as God? The majority of mankind are earthly and sensual, and have been for thousands of years. Can it be that St. Paul is correct in saying that there is a moral law written upon their heart, forbidding such carnality, and enjoining purity and holiness? Some theorizers argue that because the pagan man does not obey the law, therefore he does not know the law; and that because he has not revered and worshipped the one Supreme Deity, therefore he does not possess the idea of such a being. They look out upon the pagan populations, and see them bowing down to stocks and stones, and witness their immersion in the abominations of heathenism, and conclude that these millions of rational beings really know no better, and that therefore it is unjust to hold them responsible for their polytheism and moral corruption. But why do they confine this species of reasoning to the pagan world? Why do they not bring it into nominal Christendom and apply it there? Why does not this theorist go into the midst of European civilization—into the heart of London or Paris—and gauge the moral knowledge of the sensualist by the moral character of the sensualist? Why does he not tell us, that because this civilized man acts no better, that therefore he knows no better? Why does he not maintain, that because this voluptuary breaks all the commandments in the decalogue, therefore he must be ignorant of all the commandments in the decalogue? that because he neither fears nor loves the one only God, therefore he does not know that there is any such being?

It will never do to estimate man's moral knowledge by man's moral character. He knows more than he practices. And there is not so much difference in this particular between some men in nominal Christendom, and some men in Heathendom, as is sometimes imagined. The moral knowledge of those who lie in the lower strata of Christian civilization, and those who lie in the higher strata of Paganism, is probably not so very far apart. Place the imbruted outcasts of our metropolitan population beside the Indian hunter, with his belief in the Great Spirit, and his worship without images or pictorial representations;* beside the stalwart Mandingo of the high table lands of Central Africa, with his active and enterprising spirit, carrying on manufactures and trade with all the keenness of any civilized worldling; beside the native merchants and lawyers of Calcutta, who still cling to their ancestral Boodhism, or else substitute French infidelity in its place; place the lowest of the highest beside the highest of the lowest, and tell us if the difference is so very marked. Sin like

* There are no profane words in the (Iowa) Indian language; no light or profane way of speaking of the "Great Spirit."—*Foreign Missionary*, May, 1863, p. 337.

holiness, is a mighty leveller. The "dislike to retain God" in the consciousness, the aversion of the heart towards the purity of the moral law, vitiates the native perceptions alike in Christendom and Paganism.

The theory that the pagan is possessed of such an amount and degree of moral knowledge as has been specified has awakened some apprehensions in the minds of some Christian theologians, and has led them unintentionally to foster the opposite theory, which, if strictly adhered to, would lift off all responsibility from the pagan world, would bring them in innocent at the bar of God, and would render the whole enterprise of Christian missions a superfluity and an absurdity. Their motive has been good. They have feared to attribute any degree of accurate knowledge of God, and the moral law, to the pagan world, lest they should thereby conflict with the doctrine of total depravity. They have erroneously supposed that if they should concede to every man, by virtue of his moral constitution, some correct apprehnsions of ethics and natural religion, it would follow that there is some native goodness in him. But light in the intellect is very different from life and affection in the heart. It is one thing to know the law of God, and quite another thing to obey it. Even if we should concede to the degraded pagan, or the degraded dweller in the haunts of vice in Christian lands, all the intellectual knowledge of God and the moral law that is possessed by the ruined archangel himself, we should not be adding a partical to his moral character, or his moral excellence. There is nothing of a holy quality in the mere intellectual perceptions that there is one Supreme Being, and that he has issued a pure and holy law for the guidance of all rational creatures. The mere doctrine of the divine unity will save no man. There is no redemptive power in it. It forgives no sin, and it delivers from no bondage to sin. "Thou believest," says St. James, "that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble." Satan himself is a monotheist, and knows very clearly all the commandments of God; but his heart and will are in demoniacal antagonism with them. And so it is, only in a lower degree, in the instance of the pagan and of the natural man in every age and in every clime. This intellectual perception, therefore, this constitutional apprehension of the first principles of natural religion, instead of lifting up disobedient man into a higher and more favourable position before the eternal bar, cast him down to a deeper perdition. Light that is abused ministers to a greater condemnation; and the Eternal Judge will say to every man, Jew or Gentile, that has held any portion or degree of moral truth in unrighteousness, as his apostle said to the unfaithful Jew: "Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit

adultery ?" (Rom. ii. 21, 22.) If the heathen knew nothing at all of his Maker, and his duty, he could not be held responsible, and would not be summoned to judgment. As St. Paul affirms: "Where there is no law, there is no transgression." But if when he knew God in some degree, he glorified him not as God to that degree; and if, when the moral law was written upon his heart, he went counter to its requirements, and actually heard the accusing voice of his own conscience after so doing, then his mouth must be stopped, and he must become guilty before his judge, like any and every other disobedient creature.

It is this serious and damning fact in the history of man upon the globe, that St. Paul brings to view, in the affirmation that the pagan world "did not like to retain God in their knowledge." He accounts for all the idolatry and sensuality, all the darkness and vain imaginations of paganism, by referring them to the aversion of the natural heart. The primary difficulty was in the affections of the pagan, and not in his understanding. He knew too much for his own comfort in sin. The contrast between the divine purity that was mirrored in his conscience, and the sinfulness that was wrought into his heart and will, rendered this inborn constitutional idea of God a painful one. It was a fire in the bones. If the Psalmist, a renewed man, yet not entirely free from human corruption, could say: "I thought of God, and was troubled," much more must the totally depraved man of paganism be filled with terror, when in the thoughts of his heart, in the hour when the accusing conscience was at work, he brought to mind the one great God of gods, the vast unseen Power, whom he did not glorify, and whom he had offended. It was no wonder, therefore, that he did not like to retain the idea of such a being in his consciousness, and that he adopted all possible expedients to get rid of it. The Apostle informs us that the pagan actually called in his imagination to his aid, in order to extirpate, if possible, all his native and rational ideas and convictions upon religious subjects. He became vain in his imaginations, and his foolish heart, as a consequence was darkened, and he changed the glory of the incorruptible God, the spiritual unity of the deity, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things (Rom. i. 21-23).

He invented idolatry, and all those "gay religions full of pomp and gold," in order to blunt the edge of that sharp, spiritual conception of God which was continually cutting and lacerating his wicked and his sensual heart. Hiding himself amidst the columns of his idolatrous temples, and under the smoke of his idolatrous incense, he thought like Adam, to escape from the view and inspection of that Infinite One, who from the creation of the world downward, makes known to all men his eternal power and godhead (Rom. i. 20); who, has St. Paul taught the philosophers

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now in these ends of the ages, and in these dark habitations of cruelity, has not the culpability run down to a minimum which God in the day of judgment will "wink at ?"

We answer no ; because, in the first place, the structure of the human mind is precisely the same that it was when the Sodomites held down the truth in unrighteousness, and the Roman populace turned up their thumbs that they might see the last drops of blood ebb slowly from the red gash in the dying gladiator's side. Man, in his deepest degradation, in his most hardened depravity, is still a rational intelligence ; and though he should continue to sin on indefinitely, through cycles of time as long as those of geology, he cannot unmake himself ; he cannot unmould his immortal essence, and absolutely eradicate all his moral ideas. Even paganism itself has its fluctuations of moral knowledge. The early Roman, in the days of Numa, was highly ethical in his views of the Deity, and his conceptions of moral law. Varro informs us that for a period of onehundred and seventy years the Romans worshipped their gods without any images ;* and Salluts denominates these pristine Romans "religiosissimi mortals." And how often does the missionary discover a tribe, or a race whose moral intelligence is higher than that of the avarage of paganism. Nay, the same race, or tribe, passes from one phase of polytheism to another; in one instance exhibiting many of the elements and truths of natural religion, and in another almost entirely suppressing them. These facts prove that the pagan man is under supervision ; that he is under the righteous despotism of moral ideas and convictions ; that God is not far from him ; that he lives and moves and has his being in his Maker; and that God does not leave himself without witness in his constitutional structure. Therefore it is that this sea of rational intelligence thus surges and sways in the masses of paganism ; sometimes dashing the creature up the heights, and sometimes dashing him down into the depths.

But we answer no, to the question that is put by the objector, for a second reason, that is still more conclusive, because it is still more practical. The guilt of the pagan cannot be reduced to a minimum and dissappear, because, wherever he is found, he is found to be self-willed and determined in sin. He does not like to retain truth in his mind, or to obey it in his heart. Go into the centre of Africa to-day ; select out the most imbruted heathen ; bring to his remembrance that class of truths with which he is already acquainted, and add to them the still larger class that issue from revelation ; and you will find that he is predetermined against them. He takes sides, with all the depth and intensity of his being, with that sinfulness which is common to man, and which it is the object of both ethics and the Gospel to oppose and remove. This pagan loves the sin which is forbidden, more than he loves

* *Varro*, apud Plutarch, *Numa*, 8 ; *Augustine* : De civitate dei, IV. xxxi.

of Athens, is not far from any one of his ratio
xvii. 27); who, as the same Apostle taug
nians, though in time past he suffered
in their own ways, yet left not him
that he did good, and gave them rain
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for his return, and the same father seeing him on his return, though yet a great way off, would run and fall upon his neck and kiss him. But the heart is hard, and the spirit utterly selfish, and the will is perverse and determined, and therefore the natural knowledge of God and his law which the sinner possesses by his very constitution, and the added knowledge which the efforts of benevolent Christians have imparted to him are not strong enough to overcome his inclination and induce him to break of his sins by rghteousness. To him, also, as well as to every sin-loving man, those solemn words will be spoken in the day of final adjudication: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men who hold down (Κατεχειν) the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest within them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him, even his eternal power and godhead, are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God they glorified him not as God." The subject which we have thus discussed is exceedingly fertile in its inferences and teachings; but we shall limit ourselves to two, that have a direct bearing upon the enterprise of Foreign Missions.

1. In the first place it is evident that if the positions that have been taken are correct, natural religion consigns the entire pagan world to eternal perdition.

Strictly speaking, it is not Christianity that sends the race of mankind to hell, but it is ethics. Christ himself says that he came not into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. (John iii. 17.) Men are condemned already, previous to redemption, by the law written on their hearts; by their natural convictions of moral truth; by natural religion, whose truths and dictates they have failed to put in practice. Those theorists, therefore, who reject revealed religion, and remand man back to the first principles of ethices and morality as the only religion that he needs, send him to a tribunal that damns him. "Tell me," says St. Paul, "ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? The law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live by them." (Gal. iv. 21; iii. 12.) "Circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." (Rom. ii. 25.) If man had been true to all the principles and precepts of natural religion, it would indeed be religion enough for him. But he has not been thus true. The entire list of vices and sins recited by St Paul in the first chapter of Romans, is as contrary to natural religion as it is to revealed. And it is precisely because the pagan world has not obeyed the principles of natural religion, and is under a curse and a bondage therefore, that it is in

...s of revealed religion. Little do those ... when they propose to find a salvation ... light of natural reason and conscience. ... ealized the truths of natural conscience in ... and his outward life? What pagan is there ... that will not be found guilty before the bar ... What heathen will not need an atonement ... ve up even to the light of nature? Nay, what ... icial cultus of heathenism but a confession that ... world finds and feels itself to be guilty at the ... eason and conscience? The accusing voice within ... heir forebodings and fearful looking-for of divine ... and they endeavor to propitiate the offended Power by ... ferings and sacrifices.

... he second place, it follows inevitably from these positions ... Paul, concerning the guilt of the pagan, that nothing but ... ealed religion can save him from an eternity of sin and woe.

Our Lord Jesus Christ well knew the significance of his last command to his apostles and his church, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He knew what a measure and degree of moral truth had been wrought into the structure of the millions of mankind. He knew that there is a light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. (John 1 : 9,) He knew that that truth had been held in unrighteousness, and that that light had shined in the darkness that comprehended it not. He knew that upon the plane of natural religion and conscience the responsible creature stood a guilty criminal; that he was without excuse; that he was utterly unsheltered, and must be pierced through and through by the glittering shafts of the law which he had known, and which he had violated. The incarnation of the eternal Son of God is utterly unintelligible except upon the supposition that every human creature is a guilty creature; and this guilt is inconceivable except upon the supposition that when he knew God, he glorified him not as God.

It is this dark and awful fact which the Church of Christ is continually to keep in mind. The whole world lieth in wickedness, (1 John v. 19,) and wickedness is crime, and crime must either be cancelled by the blood of the God-man, or be punished through endless ages. We are summoned to take the same view of this wretched and sinful world which the Founder of Christianity took. We are to look through his eyes, and breathe his spirit. His eyes are a flame of fire, and pierce through all the self-deceptions by which man would extenuate or nullify his sin; and his spirit is that of self-sacrificing love to the guilty. If the Man of Sorrows saw in the mass of mankind a mass of perdition, his followers must see the same. If in the midst of all his tenderness and self-sacrificing love for the human soul, he never uttered a single word

that leads us to suppose that that soul merits anything but hell-punishment, or will receive anything but this, if it stands upon its own merits in the day of judgment; if the pitiful Son of God and Son of man, in all his various representations of the eternal future, never spoke a syllable that can be tortured into the theory of the innocency of any human being, be he Jew or Gentile, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, young or old, then the disciple is to be as the Master. The Church of Christ must look out upon the millions of India, China, and Africa, as the Son of God looked down upon them from the heights of the eternal throne, and must behold in them millions upon millions of guilty and lost moral agents. Like him they must engage in efforts for their salvation; and not waste their energies in futile queryings and doubting. The problems before the Eternal Mind, respecting the sin and salvation of man, were far more difficult of solution than those which beset the mind of the Christian or the sceptic. For our Lord and Saviour knew infallibly how many millions upon millions of the race, for whom he proposed to pour out his life-blood, would reject him. He knew long beforehand how many millions upon millions of this miserable and infatuated race would resist, and ultimately quench the only Spirit that could renovate and save them. The checkered career of the Christian Church, its alternating progress and decline in different ages and countries, the unfaithfulness of his own redeemed, and their lukewarmness in obeying his parting command to evangelize the nations—the whole career of Christianity, so discouraging in many of its aspects, lay distinct and clear before that omniscient eye. But it did not dampen his love or his ardour (if we may use such a word) for an instant. Even to his own view, much of his love and self-sacrifice would run to waste, so far as the actual redemption of immortal souls is concerned. He knew that, like his prophet, he was to stretch out his hand all day long, yea, ages after ages, to a disobedient and a gainsaying race. But he never faltered, and he never hesitated. He vailed his deity in the "muddy vesture of decay," and suffered and died in it, with the same willingness and alacrity as if he had foreknown that every human soul would have welcomed the great salvation.

Now, if our Lord and Master, knowing infallibly that millions upon millions would trample upon his blood, and that millions upon millions, through the unfaithfulness of his own church, would never even hear of the passion in Gethsemane and Calvary: if our Lord and Master, in the face of these discouragements, while sternly as the eternal nemesis of God charging home an infinite guilt upon the human race, yet tenderly as a mother for a child, received upon his own person the awful vengeance of that nemesis, we and all his people, in all time, must breathe in his spirit and imitate his example. We have no infinite and infallible know-

ledge by which to discourage us in our efforts at human salvation. We know not who will reject the message, or whether any will. We cannot

"look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow, and which will not."

We only know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses all sin from every soul upon whom it drops. And we know that our Redeemer and King has commanded us to proclaim this fact to every human creature. Events and successes are with him. The church has nothing to do but obey orders, like soldiers in a campaign.

The great and the simple work before the church is to sprinkle the nations with the blood of atonement. This it does, instrumentally, when it preaches forgiveness of sins through Christ's oblation. The one great and awful fact in human history, we have seen, is the fact of guilt. And the great and glorious fact which the mercy of God has now set over against it, is the fact of atonement. It requires no high degree of civilization to apprehend either of these facts. The benighted pagan is as easily convicted as the most highly educated philosopher; and his reception of the atonement of God is, perhaps, even less hindered by pride and prejudice.

Let the church, therefore, dismissing all secondary and inferior aims, however excellent and desirable in themselves, go forth and proclaim to all the nations that "they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God;" and also that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

SERMON XVIII.

SALVATION BY GRACE.

"By grace are ye saved."—EPHESIANS ii. 5.

No thought is more familiar to our minds than this—that all mankind are sinners. It is impossible for those who receive the Bible as the word of God to gainsay or to doubt this truth. That Bible contains explicit and reiterated and pathetic statements of human depravity. It shows us whence it sprung, dwells upon its manifestations, depicts its completeness and depth, and laments over its injuriousness and ruin. Putting aside all explicit state-

* Author's name not furnished with the manuscript.

ments, however, the fact of human depravity is implied in all the doctrines and plan of salvation. The Gospel takes our apostacy for granted, and addresses itself to sinners; and to sinners only. Its offers are made to sinners; its provisions are adapted to sinners; itself is nothing else primarily than a mode of deliverance from sin. This Scripture account of our nature and state is amply confirmed by experience. Every man at all instructed in the law of God has learned that he possesses a disposition to violate that law, and that he has actually violated it, in numberless instances and in numberless ways. The multiform wickedness that fills the earth—almost unmingled and unrelieved—conclusively prove the total depravity of the race. Every effect must have its cause: a tree cannot grow without a root. If, therefore, the experience of every man be the experience of a sinner, and the history of the world be the history of sinners, there must be a deep hid principle of sinfulness in universal human nature. Consciousness of sin includes a sense of ill-desert, or a sense of just exposure to punishment. Every man possesses this. Conscience invariably pronounces upon the guiltiness of moral evil; and what is guiltiness but that quality of an action by which it properly subjects the man to the infliction of the penalty of the divine law? Whence arise the fear of God, and the apprehensions of wrath, and the shrinking from the future, which agitate the bosom of the offender, but from the consciousness and settled persuasion that he merits, from infinite holiness and justice, only tribulation and anguish? The natural condition of men, therefore—oh, that they felt its peril and its horror!—is one of depravity, actual pollution, and exposure to the awful wrath of a holy God. Deliverance from that condition is what the Bible calls salvation. The simple but sublime and comprehensive declaration of our text is, that this salvation is of grace. The word grace is used in Scripture to represent kindness as manifested toward the ill-deserving; any unmerited favour is prompted by a gracious disposition. Mercy, as distinguished from grace, is kindness shown to the suffering; it does not contemplate the moral character of its objects. It very naturally occurs, that while the word grace is mainly used in the Bible to express the disposition of kindness toward the ill-deserving, it is sometimes employed to denote the acts of favour themselves. Says St. Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am," where he undoubtedly means, "By the divine assistance, gratuitously afforded, I am what I am." The influences of the Holy Spirit, especially, are called grace; and the fruits of the Spirit are styled graces. We have a perfect right to take the word, as occurring in the text, in both these intimately-related senses. It will well bear both, and probably was meant to do so. So understood, the meaning widens. The proposition then is, not only that salvation is gratuitous, considered as an ob-

jective blessing, but also that, considered as a subjective work, it is effected by divine power, gratuitously afforded. It is to the illustration of this great and fundamental truth that I invite your attention. And I am much mistaken, brethren, if the discussion of this subject shall not elicit very much to arouse the careless, to direct the inquiring, and to increase the humility, vigour, and comfort of the Christian's piety.

I. In the first place, then, it is a matter of pure grace that any provision has been made for the salvation of sinners. We have already said that sin implies guiltiness—that is, just exposure to punishment. This is, simply another way of saying, that God might, with perfect justice, have left sinners to suffer the misery which they deserved. But all men are sinners: therefore he might thus have left the whole race. Furthermore, the sin of all men is infinitely heinous—that is, worthy of an infinite and endless punishment. The law and threatenings of heaven, of course, imply this; and their implication should be enough to satisfy us of its truth. But it is also capable of independent proof, from the very nature of God. If the Most High be a Being infinite in all his glorious perfections, he possesses an infinite claim upon the reverence, love, and service of all his intelligent creatures; and this claim is wholly irrespective of their dispositions and circumstances. The guiltiness of an offence takes its colour and dimensions from the character and claims of him against whom it has been committed. Sin, therefore, which violates all the obligations that bind the creature to the Creator, must be guilty to a degree that is not only incomprehensible, but actually infinite. That Creator is infinite in his being—infinitely excellent and lovely in all his attributes. His claims upon the creature's love and obedience must, therefore, be actually infinite; and it follows, by irresistible inference, that the sin of the creature, which spurns those claims, must be infinitely evil. This is only to say that the whole race of men might justly have been left to suffer the punishment which the divine law pronounces—eternal banishment from heaven and joy, hopeless confinement in the regions of woe. It must, therefore, be a matter of pure grace that any provision for their salvation has been made. If they deserved the very opposite, they did not deserve this. Yes, my hearers the glory of God would have shone without abatement; the praises of God would have rung with unceasing and unflagging triumph; the worship of all holy beings would have been as profound, and their love as ardent as ever, if no scheme of redemption had ever been devised, and no gracious Saviour had ever been sent to suffer and to bleed on this accursed earth.

Plain as it seems, therefore, that the providing of salvation is a matter of mere grace—clearly as it is implied in the very nature of

the terms sin and salvation, and in the whole tenor of Scripture—it is not unfrequently overlooked or denied. Whole systems of theology are founded upon the assumption that providing a way of deliverance for sinners was an act of justice on the part of God; and many of the popular objections against the doctrines of grace proceed upon the same absurd idea. How often it is said and written: if men are either born in sin, or placed in circumstances that render sin inevitable, then God must be bound to provide a way of pardon! Such objections as this sound fair and plausible to the natural reason. It well accords with the pride of the human heart, to seek to lay back upon God the blame of our condition, and lay him under obligations for our rescue. But if we are to be guided by Scripture at all, we must forever dismiss such thoughts. There the invariable representation is, that, supposing the fall to have taken place, and supposing the continuance of the human race in their fallen and necessarily sinful state, it is still true that the gift of Christ and the mission of the Holy Ghost are acts of sovereign and undeserved mercy. They are always represented as the greatest possible displays of the grace and love of God. This is a vital and all-pervading truth, giving character to the whole economy under which we live. Before you can deny it and assume the opposite, you must change the language and the argument of Scripture from beginning to end, and you must reverse the feelings and experiences of every Christian's heart. To show that the invention and providing of salvation are not purely gracious, would make sudden silence among the redeemed of heaven—would stifle their praises and break their sounding harps. Did I deem it necessary to enter into argument against the plausible, but most unsound objection, that if men are either born in sin or placed in circumstances that render sin inevitable, then God must be bound to provide a way of pardon, it would be enough to remind you that our first father fell, not as an individual man, but as the representative or federal head of the whole race. God had a perfect right to constitute him our representative. As it was no injustice, so also it was no unkindness toward us. The arrangement was a favorable one. Now, it is easy to admit, and impossible to deny, that Adam's sin utterly disqualified him from holding any claim upon God's mercy. If, however, he sinned as our federal head, it equally disqualified us, his posterity This is not to say that we had precisely and literally the same hand in his iniquity as Adam had, but that, from the terms of the covenant, we with perfect justice share the consequences equally with him, and so are equally shut out from any claim upon divine clemency. But there is no need of this laborious reasoning upon the subject, at all. We are all sinners, conscious sinners, and excuseless sinners, before God. We therefore know and feel that to provide salvation for us must be a matter of pure and sovereign

grace. To be sinners, no matter how we came so, is to be utterly undeserving of any favour from heaven, and justly exposed to eternal punishment. Sin can not be excused, or else it would be no longer sin; and while there is guiltiness in it, it renders it forever absurd that God should be bound to show us any mercy.

II. In the second place, we remark, that the application of salvation is also a matter of grace. If God is under no obligations to save any, as we have seen, then it certainly follows that he may, without a shadow of injustice determine whom he will save. This is only to act as a sovereign—the very character in which he always has acted, not only in this matter but in every thing pertaining to the government of the world. Look for a moment at the history of nations. For ages he withheld the revelation of his will from every people but one, and that one, small, despised, and hated. Why were the Jews selected as the depositaries of the Scriptures, rather than the cultivated Egyptians, Assyrians, or Greeks? Why do you not accuse God of injustice in selecting any one nation, and passing by the rest? Why do you not complain of his partiality in opening up a way for his truth among those tribes who now rejoice in its light, and of his cruelty in delaying to send it to the people that yet sit in darkness and the shadow of death? Why not charge him with injustice in raising one people to the height of refinement, and leaving another to its squalidness and barbarism? You would deem it the height of insolence and impiety to do this. But why so, unless because it is true that no nation has any claim upon God's favors, all being entirely undeserving and guilty before him, and that therefore it is perfectly righteous and altogether merciful in him to extend his favours to whomsoever he pleases? But the case is not one whit different when you speak of the particular application of salvation to individuals. Was God unrighteous when he loved Jacob and hated Esau, even before their birth? when he called Abraham alone, leaving great multitudes to perish? when he saved only Noah and his family, not simply from the deluge of water, but also from the deluge of sin and retributive wrath? and when only Lot and his house were preserved from the corruption and doom of the Sodomites? If the particular and sovereign application of salvation is unjust, it must be unjust to some person, now, to whom is it unjust? To those who are saved? Ask them, and see if they make any complaint against God's righteousness. To those who are not saved? They only suffer what they deserved; and their doom is not one whit aggravated by the simple fact that some others are plucked as brands from the burning. Will any attempt to say that it is unjust in God to save only some of mankind, when he would have been just if he had destroyed them all? Or shall we presume to affirm that God is unmerciful, be-

cause he has mercy on whom he will have mercy? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Shall not the judge of the whole world do right? Let us then, without any cavilling or reluctance, take home the truth, that the application of salvation is a matter of pure grace. I would have no reason to complain, if God should leave me to reap the recompense of my sin, while my nearest neighbour is saved. The Sovereign Lord goeth forth among the children of men, and saith to one "live," and he lives—oh, what matchless kindness!—while to another he is silent, and he goes on to his death. If thou be among the saved, extol with me the wonderful grace of God, not simply in the general provision of salvation, but also in the special application of it to thy soul. Say thou in Scripture words, while your heart burns with thankfulness and love: "By the grace of God I am what I am. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the praise;" This, my hearers, is the invariable representation of the Bible, and this the experience of every true child of God

III. But, in the third place, we proceed to say that the terms on which salvation is offered are purely gratuitous; that is, justification also is of grace. You do not need to be told, my hearers, that all which is necessary to secure the sinner's reconciliation and acceptance with God, has been performed by Christ. Our Saviour's work was complete and final. This is the only view of it which at all accords with the representations of Scripture, and does proper honor to the divine wisdom and love. If this be true, then nothing more need or can be done. The sinner has no penances to perform, no works to accomplish, absolutely nothing to do, as the ground of his pardon and acceptance. He could not do any thing of that kind, if he were required, and there is not the slightest necessity for it, if he could. His Saviour has performed a spotless obedience and offered a perfect sacrifice. The divinity of his person gave to both these an infinite value, so that they entirely satisfy the justice of God, and easily secure the fullest salvation for all who are interested in them. Those who believe in him with a self renouncing faith are thus interested, not that the faith has any thing meritorious in it to secure the imputation of Christ's righteousness, but that there is a natural fitness between it and such imputation. There would be no propriety in saving a soul that was not in the highest sense willing to be saved, and heartily disposed to honor and glorify God for its salvation. Such a thing could not occur under the government of a jealous God, like ours, It is therefore true that the sinner need not, can not, and does not do any thing as the ground of his pardon and acceptance; his justification by the imputing of his Saviour's righteousness is entirely of grace. But it is important still further to remark, that there is no preparation

necessary on the sinner's part before he is warranted to accept the offered pardon; he has nothing to do before coming to Christ, and nothing to do but come to Christ. The righteousness of that precious Saviour is offerd him in good faith as an absolute gratuity; he has nothing to do but take it. It is offered him for present acceptance—for acceptance in his present character and condition; he need not wait one moment; he has no previous work to perform—nothing to do but take its righteousness gratefully and lovingly at the generous hand of God. There is always misapprehension here on the part of the inquirer. That misapprehension, however, does not spring from any want of clearness or explicitness in the declarations of Scripture, but only from that incredulity and sordid selfishness of the natural heart, which utterly disqualifies it to understand the unbounded liberality of God. There is no restriction or limitation to the statement: "He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life," There is no equivocation, mental reservation or implied condition in the assurance: "Him that cometh unto me [simply cometh] I will in no wise cast out." It is quite true that none will thus come—thus believe—who have not some sense of their misery and danger, some sight of the evil that there is in sin; but this is very different from making these feelings and experiences any part of our warrant for accepting the Gospel. No such warrant is needed, or is possible, other than free invitation and universal command of God. A man may publish the munificent offer that he will provide a supply of food for all who ask for it, and it may be true that none will ask but the poor and hungry; but still you would not say that the poverty or hunger was the condition of the gift. There was no condition but the asking. Precisely analogous is the offer of Gospel grace through Jesus Christ. And the distinction which we have been making is far from useless, as it is assuredly just. It takes away from the concerned sinner all pretence for waiting; it brings home upon his conscience the unrelieved weight of present obligations; it shuts him up to the matter of immediate action; and in case of refusal or neglect, it stops his mouth in utter speechlessness. Here, then, is the only proper language for the soul that hears the gracious invitations of the Gospel:

"Just as I am, without one plea,
Save that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

"Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

"Just as I am, thy love unkown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come!"

IV. Fourthly, we remark that we are indebted to the same grace for the preservation and increase of the divine life: sanctification also is of grace. It is with the work of the spirit in the soul, just as it is with the works of the divine power in the outer world. The universe of matter possesses in itself no principle of self-support and perpetual growth. On the other hand, the same divine power which at first created it from nothing, is momentarily exercised in its maintenance. The laws of nature, as we call them are nothing but the chosen modes of the Almighty's operation. Were that operation to cease for an instant, "the round globe and all which it inherit" would sink to wreck, or to nonentity. The preservation of the universe, therefore is nothing less then a continued creation. It requires the constant exercise of the very same power which spoke organized matter into being, to maintain it from falling back again to its original nothing. Precisely in the same way, the sanctification of the believer is nothing less than a continued conversion. As it required the same power which raised Christ from the dead to quicken his soul and inspire it with the breath of spiritual life, so it requires the very same power, in momentary exercise, to preserve that life from extincton and to promote its increase. Without Christ he can do nothing. It is not I that live said Paul, but Christ that liveth in me. Every grace of the Christian character—so far from being due to any innate or interior principle of life or to any agency of the man himself—is the direct fruit of the Holy Spirit; and that Holy Spirit is the gift of God. This condition of dependence upon gracious assistances and supplies, is at once the believer's necessity, privilege, security, and happiness. That he has neither strength nor wisdom in himself is no disadvantage, for he is connected with infinite wisdom and Almighty power. If he forgets his true state and thinks himself to be something, he presently finds he is indeed nothing; but if he is content to be nothing and to have nothing, he is sure to find a seasonable and abundant communication of all that he wants. Thus he lives, like Israel in the wilderness, upon mere bounty; but then, it is a bounty unchangeable, unwearied, inexhaustible, and all-sufficient. Moses, when speaking of the methods the Lord took to humble Israel, mentions his feeding them with manna as one method. This is not so easy to be understood. One would think they were rather in danger of being proud when they saw themselves provided for in such an extraordinary way. But the manna would not keep; they could not hoard it up, and were therefore in a state of absolute dependence from day to day. This was well suited to humble them. Just so in spirtual things. We

should be better pleased, perhaps, to be set up with a stock or sufficiency at once; but His way is best. The Lord's glory is most displayed, and our safety is best secured, by keeping us quite poor and empty in ourselves, and supplying us from one minute to another, according to our need. And what are we that the Most High should thus notice us—should visit us every morning, and water us every moment? Oh, it is a most astonishing thought, that the mighty God should thus stoop and accommodate himself to the situation, wants, and capacities of the weakest, meanest, and poorest of his children!" Praise to his glorious grace!

V. Lastly, the Christian's admission to heaven is also of grace. By nature he deserved the very opposite of heaven, even the wrath and curse of God forever. Conversion and sanctification, as we have seen, are the gifts of God's grace, and therefore lay not one partical of merit to the account of their subject. Not all his tears of penitence, and exercises of faith, and works of love, invest him with the least claim upon heavenly rewards. They are the gracious products of the Holy Spirit, and could never have been performed by his unaided powers; they are stained with imperfections, then, and far from acceptable on their own account in the eyes of a Holy God; and were they original and perfect, even then they would only be the proper duty of the creature, and would possess nothing of absolute merit. It is true, indeed, that the Christian becomes an heir of heaven, and holds a claim upon his place in heaven; but that heirship, that claim, are not his own, but Christ's —Christ's, who has graciously conferred them upon him. It is in that Saviour, alone, and on account of his vital union with that Saviour, that he possesses all things; and since that union was consummated by grace, all the privileges to which it introduces him are gracious, too. Yes, my brethren, as it was grace that led our wandering feet into the heavenly way, and grace that defends us from dangers, supports us under troubles, and supplies us in our necessity upon the road, so it is grace that shall open to us the the portals of the celestial city, and welcome us to the abode of God. "Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen." A ready response this doctrine finds in every pious heart. This it is that shall wake our gratitude and love, through all eternity. Hark! how the echoes roll around the corridors of heaven! "Now unto him that loved us, and washed us, from our sins in his own blood, be glory, honor, and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen."

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

For the Prayer-Meeting.

Pulpit Prayer Answered.

MANY years ago a very learned minister of England was in the habit of preparing his sermons very carefully, and he used to read them very accurately. He did so for years, but there was never known to be a sinner saved under him—never such a wonder. The poor good man—for he was an earnest man, and wished to do good—was one day at prayer in the pulpit, praying to God that he would make him a useful minister. When he had finished his prayer, he was stone-blind. He had sufficient self-possession to preach the sermon extempore, which he had prepared with notes. People did not notice his blindness, but they never heard the doctor preach such a sermon as that before. There was deep attention; there were souls saved. He found his way from the pulpit, and began to express his deep sorrow that he had lost his eye-sight, when some good old woman present said, perhaps a little unkindly, but still very truthfully:

"Doctor, we have never heard you preach like this before; and if that is the result of your being blind, it is a pity you were not blind twenty years ago, for you have done more good to-day than you have done in twenty years."

Holy Salutation.

There is a beautiful simplicity in all pure religion and pure worship, very far removed from forms and ceremonies. It is the heart which gives life and character to true devotion. What multitudes in Christian lands, even among the educated and refined, are put to shame by the pious simplicity of Icelanders.

It is said of the Icelanders that they scrupulously observe the usage of reading the sacred Scriptures every morning, the whole family joining in the singing and prayers. When the Icelander awakes, he salutes no person until he has saluted God. He usually hastens to the door, adores there the Author of Nature and Providence, then steps back into the dwelling, saying to his family: "God grant you a good day!" What a beautiful illustration is this of the Christian obligation on the part of households to recognize and worship God!

Frugal of Prayer.

If prayer is the "Christian's vital health," then he might as well try to be frugal of his physical health as to be frugal of prayer; by which he would soon become weak and faint for want of strength for the ordinary duties of life.

No Christian, then, can afford to be frugal of prayer, in the intervals of daily business and amusement. Enjoyment of all communion with God must be impaired by the loss of these little tributaries. A Christian's life, so conducted, must languish as a tree does whose fibrous roots are stripped off, leaving only its truncal roots, possibly

...y a chapter for its nourish-...nt. That Christian is hoping against impossibilities who thinks to enjoy a life of intercourse with God in any such way.

We are opposing God's method of working if our life has a tendency to incapacitate us for the enjoyment of prayer *at all times*. If by needless excess of worldly cares; if by inordinate desires, which render it impossible for us to accomplish our object in life *without* such excess of care; if by frivolous habits; if by the reading of infidel or effeminate literature; if by an indolent life; if by any self-indulgence in physical regimen—we render the habit of fragmentary prayer impracticable or unnatural to us, *we are crossing the methods of God's working*. Something has gone wrong in the life of that Christian who finds himself thus estranged from filial freedom with God.

Such a Christian must, sooner or later, be brought back to Christ, and must begin life anew. He will come back heavy laden and in tears. No words express more becomingly the wail of his spirit, whenever he comes to his right mind, than the plaint of Cowper:

"Oh for a *closer walk* with God!"

Ingratitude to God.

Some years since an humble but pious and devoted colored minister was preaching to a congregation, in one of the cities of New-England and took occasion to illustrate man's ingratitude to God. He said in quaint language; "Mankind be just like de hogs. Dey go under de acorn-tree, and dey eat de acorn, but dey neber once look up to see where de acorn comes from." And so it is as a matter of common observation. What multitudes of families and persons sit down to the well-spread tables of their daily meals without one word of thanks to God for his bounties, or even thought of the giver of all their comforts!

An Incurable Disease.

The pious John Newton closes a letter to friend in the following truly instructive language: "You kindly inquire after my health; myself and family are, through the divine favor, perfectly well; yet, healthy as I am, I labor under a growing disorder, for which there is no cure—I mean *old age*. I am not sorry it is a mortal disease, from which no one recovers; for who would live always in such a world as this, who has a scriptural hope of an inheritance in a world of light? I am now in my seventy-second year, and seem to have lived long enough for myself. I have known something of the evils of life, and have had a large share of the good. I know what the world can do, and what it cannot do; it can neither give nor take away that peace of God, which passeth all understanding; it cannot soothe a wounded conscience, nor enable us to meet death with comfort. That you, my dear sir, may have an abiding and abounding experience that the gospel is a catholicon, adapted to all our wants and all our feelings, and a suitable help when every other help fails, is the sincere and ardent prayer of your affectionate friend."

The Earnest Preacher.

Many years ago, two young men were strolling, on a Lord's day, through the streets of London.

One of them, named Henry Barrow, was a barrister of fine talents and good education, but given to reckless dissipation, and by his jovial humour and rare social gifts enticing others into vice. His companion, named Sutton, gave evidence that he had spent the previous night in debauchery, and had not recovered from its influence. He was in a half-penitent mood, and, suffering keenly from the effects of vice, was prating of reform. Barrow, whose strong constitution was yet unharmed by indulgence, could not resist an inclination to banter his moody comrade. He made sport of his serious words and inward remorse; asked him if he had turned preacher and taken orders; threatened to complain of him to the church authorities, and have him apprehended for heresy; and finally advised him, like Falstaff, to take another bottle of sack, as a potent medicine.

While using his sharp wit, to the great discomfort of the unhappy Sutton, they passed an open church, from which rang out the voice of an earnest preacher. Barrow stopped to listen.

"Let us go in," he said.

"What for?" said Sutton, "to hear a man rant?"

"Yes," was the reply; "this man is worth hearing, for he is evidently in earnest. I don't care for the priests who repeat their lessons parrot-like—but a live man is always worth listening to."

Sutton would not be persuaded, but went in search of more sack, muttering something about "mad freaks," but Barrow kept to his purpose of hearing the earnest preacher. He heard to some purpose, for the minister was a man of fervid zeal, and by the sharpness of his rebukes against sin, and pungent warnings of the judgment to come, startled Barrow's slumbering conscience. The man of pleasure was sobered, and went from the church to his room to think of his ways. The arrow of truth had reached its mark. The profligate was tortured by the agony of shame and remorse. His days were full of gloomy unrest—his nights were sleepless. At length he could not bear the burden alone, but sought for Christian counsel, went often to the house of God, read diligently the Bible he had scorned, and, like the pardoned prodigal, found peace in the blood of atonement. The gay worldling from that casual attendance on an earnest preacher, became one of the most earnest and useful preachers of his age, an able leader of the Nonconformists, and sealed his testimony by an exultant martyr-death.

Christ the light of the World.

"I AM the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—JOHN viii. 12.

GOD is light, and Christ is "the image of the invisible God;" God of God, light of light. . . The visible light of the world is the sun, and Christ is the "Sun of Righteousness." One sun enlightens the whole world; so does one Christ, and there needs no more. . . It is the happiness of those who follow Christ, that they "shall not walk in darkness." Follow Christ, and we shall follow him to heaven. —*M. Henry.*

"Lord, be it mine, like thine elect, to choose
The better part; like them to use
The means thy love hath given;
Be holiness my aim on earth,
That death be welcomed as a birth
To life and bliss in heaven!"
Bishop Mant.

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Let us be an example of godliness. Let us be a light to them that yet abide in darkness. Let not the name of God be evil spoken of through us. His name is holy. "Woe be unto the world," saith Christ, "because of offences; for it must needs be that offences come; but woe be unto that man by whom the offence cometh." . .

The light of God shines in the darkness of this world. It is the sweet incense and savor of God. Whersoever the breath thereof is received it bringeth life.-*Bp. Jewel.*

Lord Jesus, thou Light of Truth and Sun of Righteousness, shed thy bright beams upon my heart, that I may know, and knowing, love thee.

A Good Minister of Jesus Christ

THIS is the title, as it is the text, of a discourse by Rev. Dr. Williams, which is full of devout and profitable thought. We select the two following lessons, important in themselves, and beautifully and impressively stated:

"1. The minister needs, alike adequately to conceive and fully discharge his vast work, not only piety, but eminence in piety. It was the testimony of Shepherd, the devout and most successful pastor at its first settlement, of Cambridge, in the rising colony of Massachusetts Bay, that he had never preached a sermon to others that had not cost him prayers in its preparations, and that he had not first preached to his own soul. Well does such a spirit become those who are, while ministering the great remedy of souls to others, themselves surrounded with infirmities! and who, unless watchful, prayerful, and devoted, imbibe and diffuse instead of relieving the plague they were intended to stay. But is it most unbefitting to see a consumptive and ghastly steward dispensing the delicacies of a royal banquet which he seems himself unable to partake or relish? Is it a sight to move disgust when the viands of a festive gathering are placed on the board by leprous hands, that distil their pollution on all which they touch? Is it melancholy to see the ragged artisans of Europe toiling in utter destitution to weave fabrics of regal splendor which they, the makers, never may hope to wear, and which form an appalling contrast with their own looped and tattered wretchedness? It is yet more unsuitable, that truth should dwell in the mind of a religious teacher only to be transmitted to others and not to be transmuted into the nutriment and substance of his own soul: "*Nourished up*," says the apostle, "in the words of faith and good doctrine whereunto thou hast attained." The doctrine should have fed its dispenser, that it may profit its recipients.

"2. It is a day of change in which we live; and man, in every age,

has shows an avidity for the new the startling, and the strange. But let us remember, that as the stars shining over us are the same that let down their light on Adam, so the great starlight truths in the firmament of Revelation must remain the same; and Jesus Christ, the great Truth of all revelation, the one decree of Heaven, and the one hope of Earth, must remain in our theology, as in that of our fathers, unchangeable, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Far, in this matter of the soul's salvation, be from us, and from our churches, the spirit of restlessness and self-sufficient innovation, that seeks something vaster than heaven, newer than truth, and better than God."

The Man of Sorrows.

WHOSE sorrows were ever like his? Who was ever so deeply acquainted with grief as he? Those sufferings should seem none the less interesting to us because ages have passed away since the ground was moistened by those great drops, as it were blood, which fell from his face. They are still remembered by him who endured them, and by those ministering spirits which came to strengthen him in his hour of weakness and temptation; and, doubtless, he is now deeply grieved, and feels that he is crucified afresh, when he witnesses the contemptuous rejection of that sacrifice for sin, which was made at so vast an expense, and the obstinate refusal of a guilty world to come to him for the life that he is so willing to give. We should never forget that hour of darkness, when, being sorrowful even unto death, he prayed, if it were possible, the cup might pass from him, but nevertheless devoted himself to death according to the divine will; for in the unutterable woe of Gethsemane each redeemed soul partakes as deeply as if no other soul had ever sinned. One drop of that blood which began to be shed in that mysterious agony, even as whole fountains, cleanses from all sin, and without it there is no remission.

If those who complain of the coldness and heartlessness of the world, and sigh for a more affectionate remembrance in the hearts of others, and feel that life is a barren wilderness, without sympathy, would but turn their thoughts to this divine sufferer, and consider that Jesus, having loved his own amidst the desolations of earth, loved them to the end, and bore them on his heart as the trophies of his victorious grace, there would be less fruitless longing for that which perishes with the using, fewer withered hopes, and more earnest desires for a deeper union with him who, although all things else change, knows no variableness nor shadow of turning. Those who are nearest and dearest to our hearts are at the best unstable and changeable creatures. They are not always the same. Their relations to us are continually changing. The glory of an unalterable love is reserved for its full manifestation in the heavenly world.

Anecdote of Doctor Nettleton.

A YOUNG man just completing his professional studies was induced to accompany some female friends to the pastor's study. He there gave a promise; that before he retired that night, he would, on his knees, offer prayer for himself. Possessing strict integrity, when he went to his room he thought of his promise; he was embarrassed--

he walked the room, in a cold winter's night, till late, before his proud heart would yield; and when he fell on his knees, such was the struggle in his mind, he said, "He would not, if he could be President of the United States, that any should know he was on his knees in prayer." There he was awakened, and after more than a week's struggle, he was made willing in the day of God's power. He became not only distinguished as a physician, but as a Christian and an officer in the church.

For the Prayer-Meeting.

THE TEMPTER.—As in the robbing of a house it is the custom of the sturdiest thieves to put in a little boy at a window, who being once within the house, may easily open the doors and let them in too, so the tempter, in the rifling of the soul, despairs for the most part to attempt his entrance by some gross sin of a dismal, frightful hue and appearance, and therefore, he employs a lesser that he may creep and slide into it insensibly; which yet, as little as it is, will so open and unlock the bars of conscience that the biggest and the most enormous abominations shall at length make their entrance, and seize and take possession of it.

The Sympathies of Angels.

The sympathies, desires, hopes, and anxieties of angels respect man as a sinner—a child of guilt and yet of hope—lost and yet within reach of salvation—under the power of death and yet immortal— on trial for life eternal— running a race for heaven or for hell! What men call the great events of time are trifles in their sight: what men call mean, small, of no moment, they count grand, vast, chief, every thing. As they wing their flight over this once fair but now blighted world, and survey its varied scenes —the din of its business, the glitter of its wealth, the pride of its greatness, the temples of its learning, the tread of its armies and the war of its navies, the tumult of the nations and the crash of falling kingdoms these are not the events which arrest their attention and excite their interest, but they do mark the falling tear of the penitent, and listen to the sigh of the contrite; they pause over the dwelling of prayer and mingle in the circle of devotion; they watch the sinner in all his goings, and register the number of the saved, add bear to heaven the joyful news when a soul is converted.

The soul of man is of infinite value, or the angels of God would not take such an interest in its welfare. Its guilty and ruined state while perishing in sin is inexpressibly awful, or its recovery to God and life would not thus thrill the heavenly world with joy. Oh, how would angels plead and toil and strive to save men, if they were but permitted such an access to and influence over them as Christians possess! And can Christians be stupefied or neglectful, when angels are thus awake and would do so much to pull men out of the fire of perdition? can human or angelic efforts be better expended then in behalf of man's salvation? What are the grand achievements of art, science, or arms—what the noblest enterprises of commerce or ambition, compared to the bringing of a single sinner to Christ? "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Christian reader, take home this thought to your heart. Ponder it well. No other end is worth living for. Live for this. Let those sublime motives which ruled the mission and life of Jesus Christ rule you heart and life.

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SERMON XIX.

BY REV. S. T. SPEAR, D.D., OF BROOKLYN, N. Y.*

"Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which were made after the similitude of God."—JAMES iii. 9.

THE apostle, in the context, was condemning the vices of the tongue. Sometimes employed in praising God, it seemed to him strange, that the same instrument should be used in cursing men, "which are made after the similitude of God."

Similitude means likeness. "The similitude of God" is likeness to God. Man is hence like God, not in all respects, yet sufficiently so to make it true, that he is fashioned after the similitude of his Maker.

This idea and mode of expression are doubtless borrowed from the book of Genesis. God said,—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him." After the flood it was said,—"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man." A special emphasis is placed on this view of human nature. Ac-

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cording to the estimate of the Psalmist, man was made but a little lower than the angels, in the divine arrangement crowned with glory and honor, indeed, commissioned to hold dominion over all the inferior works of the Creator's hand.

Upon this view are suspended the most elementary questions in morals. What is man, not as a king or a subject, not in the mere accidents of his being or birth, but in his essential nature? The fate of all morality turns upon the answer given to this question. All our rights and our social duties, in their final analysis, terminate at this point. The definition of man includes the ground-work of morality, just as the definition of God includes that of piety.

I shall hence seek, in this sermon, to evolve those views of human nature, which are implied in its creation after the similitude of God, believing them to be among the very first principles of Christian morality. I remark then,—

In the first place, that man is a creature of God.—God gave him his being, and all the faculties connected therewith. Every man can say to the Great Source of all being,—"Thou art my Father, and I am thy child." We all have a divine parentage, direct in the creation and gift of our spiritual endowments, indirect in our earthly pedigree. This is just as true of the sun-burnt African, as it is of the Caucasian who may perchance glory in the hue of his skin. Whatever man is, that God has made him. If there be moral sublimity in the divine charter of his rights, or in the duties imposed upon him, or in the attributes and objects of his existence, God has placed it there. Let us be careful not to misinterpret the creature, lest we may be involved in the guilt of dishonouring the Creator.

I observe, secondly, that man, amid all his diversities of type, possesses a common nature.—The idea of James is, that all men, not simply some, are made after the similitude of God. This similitude is common to the race, being the essential fact among all classes of men.

Human beings, notwithstanding their diversities of complexion, physical organization, religious beliefs, social customs and manners, condition and improvement, form one, and but one species—one great family called men—being bound together by a common nature, descending from a common parentage both divine and human, and separated from all the tribes of mere animal life by an impassable gulf. This unity or identity of nature makes every man our brother. It connects the race by a fraternity of relations and obligations. Each is a type of the whole; each is a complete pattern of what is essential to humanity; in each you see a member of the human family, and as such, your equal by a Magna Charta much older than that of King John.

Paul, when standing on Mars-Hill, and speaking to the proud and philosophic Athenians, who themselves superior to all other races of men, informed them,—first, that God had "made the world and all things therein,"—secondly, that this same God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." This phrase, "one blood," evidently means one nature with one common parentage. The apostle had in view the Mosaic record of man's creation and early settlement of the earth. His eye was fixed upon Adam, who in the Scriptures is called "the first man," because he is the common ancestor of all men. Paul's statement to those who admit his inspired authority, is then decisive as to the homogeneous nature and origin of human beings. Adam is the common father of us all.

The account of the creation as given by Moses, is equally conclusive. According to this account, Adam and Eve are the primitive sources of the human family. Noah, who transmitted the life of the race across the flood, was one of the patriarchs, decended from, and born in the line of Adam. Noah was a man, bearing the distinctive lineaments of the first father. His three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, were men. From them, according to the Scriptures, have sprung all the nations of the earth, the Negro races of Africa, whose humanity has sometimes been questioned, being the natural progeny of Ham. Ham, I suppose, was a man; and hence I infer that his children are men and will be to the last generation. They are black men; yet color is no criterion of humanity.

The apostacy of Adam involved the race in sin and death, because he is our common father; and so too, the redemption by Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and man, is provided for all without any reference to the distinction of color or country. In the language of Dr. Smyth, of South Carolina, our common humanity and common parentage are "made the basis on which all the doctrines of Scripture relating to the fall and recovery, the guilt and redemption of man, are founded." They also "form the foundation on which are erected the claims of charity, love, and all the offices of Christian philanthropy." The command to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, refers to all the varieties of men found on the habitable globe. The essential unity of the human race is as certain as the truth of the Bible.

The same conclusion equally follows when we bring this question to the bar of science. Dr. Breckinridge has well said, —"Every department of knowledge has been searched for evidence, and all respond with a uniform testimony. The physical structure, constitution, and habits of the race,—the mode

in which it is produced, in which it exists, in which it perishes, —everything that touches its mere animal existence, demonstrates the absolute certainty of its unity; so that no other generalization of physiology is more clear or more sure. Rising one step, to the highest manifestation of man's physicial organization,— his use of language and the power of connected speech,—the most profound survey of this most tedious and complex part of knowledge, conducts the inquirer to no conclusion more indubitable than that there is a common origin, a common organization, a common nature, underlying and running through this endless variety of a common power, peculiar to the race, and to it alone. Thus a second science—philology—has borne its marvelious testimony. Rising one more step, and passing more completely into a higher region, we find the rational and moral nature of men of every age and kindred absolutely the same;—those great faculties by which man alone, and yet by which every man perceives that there is in things that distinction which we call true or false, and that other distinction which we call good and evil, upon which distinction and which faculties rests at last the moral and intellectual destiny of the entire race, belonging to us as men, without which we are not men, and with which we are at the head of the visible creation of God. So a third science—the science which treats of the whole moral constitution of man, embracing in its wide scope many subordinate sciences—has delivered its testimony. If we rise another step, and survey man as he is gathered into families and tribes and nations, with an endless variety of development, we still behold the broad foundations of a common nature reposing under all,—the living proofs of a common origin struggling through all,—the grand principles of a common being ruling in the midst of all. So a fourth, and the youngest of the sciences—ethnology—brings her tribute. And now from this lofty summit survey the whole track of ages. In their length and in their breadth, scrutinize the recorded annals of mankind. There is not one page on which one fact is written, which favors the historical idea of a diversity of nature of origin; while the whole scope of human history involes assumes, and proclaims, as the first and grandest historic truth, the absolute unity of the race."

As to the Ethiopian race, or Cushites the descendants of Ham through Cush, resident in Central, Western and Southern Africa, Dr. Smyth, in his admirable treatise on the "Unity of the Human Races," has clearly shown that comparatively a high degree of civilization was the former condition of the Negro, amply evincing his claim to a place in the great calendar of humanity. The effort to displace him from this position is a failure The Negro, notwithstanding his present degradation, is a man, historically and philosophically a man. He be-

longs to a race that was once powerful. Heeren observes in his "Historical Researches," that, "except the Egyptians, there is no aboriginal people of Africa, with so many claims upon our attention as the Ethiopians" He speaks of them as "from the remotest times to the present, one of the most celebrated and yet most mysterious of nations." It is the opinion of Niebuhr the great historian, that hieroglyphic writing, and all that we afterwards find as Egyptian civilization, originated with the Ethiopians. In the seventh century before Christ, Ethiopian kings conquered Egypt and reigned over it for fifty years. Long before this, the Ethiopians were a famous and powerful people, often disputing the supremacy of Egypt in arts as well as in arms, Cambyses, the Persian invader, having conquered Egypt, sent ambassadors as spies to Ethiopia. The reply to the monarch was in these words,—"Go, tell your king he is not a just man,—else he had not coveted a land not his own, nor brought slavery on a people who never did him any wrong. Bear him this bow, and say,—The King of the Ethiops thus advises the King of the Persians,—When the Persians can pull a bow of this strength thus easily, then let them come with an army of superior strength against the long-lived Ethiopians. Till then, let them thank the gods that they have not put it into the heart of the sons of the Ethiops to covet countries which do not belong to them." This language has the clear ring of a powerful and energetic humanity. Herodotus speaks of the ancient Ethiopians as a tall and powerful race of men. The eunuch to whom Philip preached, and who seems to have been a Jewish proselyte, belonged to this race He was a man of great authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians; and surely no one will doubt the humanity of this eunuch, or his high development as a man, who has read the history of his conversion.

I am quite aware that the Ethiopian race has for a long period been the subject of a sad decline, and that its present condition is one of extreme depression; yet this phenomenon is not peculiar to the Ethiopian. The Egypt of to-day is not the Egypt that once took the lead in the civilization of the world. Greece and Rome, where are they? Certainly not where or what they were two thousand years ago. In the seventh century the Arab race was exceedingly powerful; and yet it has now lost its military prestige and political empire. That which has befallen the tropical man of Africa, has happened in the history of other people. It is well for us to remember that when the Ethiopian was in his glory, our British ancestors were savages, feeding on acorns, eating the raw flesh of animals, and clad in the skins of wild beasts. Though barbarians, they were men; and so the descendants of Ham, the

Cushites, are still men, though greatly fallen from the position of their ancestors, inhabiting a very productive country, and wanting nothing but Christianity and good government to make them again a power in the world. The time will come when Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto God; and then the triumphs of the gospel in the elevation of her long degraded sons, will leave no doubts as to the question of their essential humanity. We pay a poor compliment to science, and a much poorer one to religion, when we seek to justify our oppression of this race by denying its participation in all those attributes physical and mental, by which man is distinguished from a brute. The Negro is no more a brute than I am, no less a man than I am. His humanity makes him my brother, the descendant of my father, related to me by the bonds of a common origin and a common nature. His rights to him are as sacred and valuable as mine are to me. The noblest elements of any man are common to all. Man is a much larger word than King. This, I take it, is the doctrine of a true Christian Democracy.

I am now prepared to say in the third place, that besides being the creatures of God, and possessing a common nature, all men are made in His mental image.—God is a Spirit, having no form or bodily parts. Man is a spirit, as such allied to that vast empire of beings of whom God is the Head, all of whom are fashioned after the image of their Maker, in this sense being partakers of the divine nature.

This image of God as set forth in the structure of man, embraces the following particulars: first, REASON, to think, to investigate God and things, to conceive of ends and means, to judge of the true and the false: secondly, CONSCIENCE, to see the good and the evil, enforcing the former and condemning the latter, making man a moral being subject to the guidance of law, and justly responsible for his conduct; thirdly, FREE WILL, lifting him above the region of mere mechanical forces, and thus fitting him to be the voluntary and uncoerced source of his own spiritual deeds: fourthly, AFFECTIONS, that like his God he may love, and possess a moral character: finally, IMMORTALITY, rendering his mental life once begun, coeval with his Author. These characteristics of man as a spirit give him his rank, and assimilate him to his Maker, being the working elements of his career and destiny in both worlds. Whether civilized or savage, black or white, bond or free, saintly or sinful, living or dying, in heaven or in hell, these principles make him a MAN—that sacred, moral, and immortal personality, upon whose nature is installed the image of God, whose native glories no event can change, and no hand expunge. Degrade this gifted creature as much as you please, and still he lives, and moves, and acts and thinks, and wills, and feels, with the unmistakable marks

and expressions of his essential manhood. Place the heel of oppression upon his neck, and crush him to the very earth, and yet by an instinct as irrepressible as it is powerful, he will lift the banner of his outraged nature, assert his sense of the wrong, pour the agonizing dirge of despair upon the pitiless breeze. You cannot sink man below the consciousness that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are his inalienable rights. You cannot beat these ideas out of his soul. God has placed them there. They are the fixed convictions, and permanent aspirations of human nature. No education can change them, or make them false to themselves. What they say in one age, that they say in every age.

Such is the man of moral philosophy—the man of the Christian Scriptures—the man whom we are bound to see whenever and wherever we look upon any human form—the man whom God has made in his own image, and on whom no earthly power may innocently write the epitaph of buried and ignored humanity. This is the man you observe in prattling infancy, in verdant and joyous youth, in ripened age, in trembling years, in the dying hour—as really man in the dungeon as in the palace—whose essential nature no crime can forfeit, whose elementary constitution no earthly cause can improve, and whose distinction from a thing is traced in letters of eternal light.

He who has not reached this view of man, has scarcely begun to see the object. It is the great view where monarchs and subjects, philosophers and Christians meet to chant the imperial glories of a common origin. We must not reason about human nature with rice swamps, cotton fields, commercial advantage, and family affinity, for our premises, if we would reason correctly. We must see man as he is, as God has made him in his own image. This view clearly gained, and thoroughly penetrating the empire of thought, is the grand mount of vision on which to stand, and from which to look.

I remark fourthly, that God has invested man with a regal prerogative, somewhat analagous to his own. Let me quote the Scriptures on this point. "And God said Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have DOMINION over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." Thus by a divine charter, men are made the lords of earth, receiving it as a patrimony from God, related to all inferior beings and things somewhat as God is to the total kingdom of existence, and hence in this sense bearing the image of his dominion. This passage contains the primitive deed of trust from the Divine Granter to man the created and rational grantee, written in the chancery of heaven and substantially saying to man,—"This is your earth, its land,

its sea, its air its waving forests, its mighty rivers, all its tribes of animal life that creep, roam, swim or fly, its beasts for burden and its beasts for food. Having made it for you I herewith give it you Subject to my control, have dominion over it. Use its laws and appropriate its forces. I constitute you a proprietor as I myself am one."

You may not have one thought of the fact; yet here is the first property charter ever published in our world, the original from which all others are derived, containing an inventory of the earth, its fish, its fowl. its cattle, its creeping things, as legitimately subject to the possession, use and dominion of man. Our right to coerce the labor of a brute, and even take the life of inferior animals to supply our wants, depends upon the gift of God. They were made for these purposes, and hence may be lawfully thus used. They have no destiny of their own aside from their relation to man. They belong to the furniture of the globe for our convenience, just as mines of coal and metallic ore are laid up in the bowels of the earth for the good of man.

You will observe, that man himself is not placed in this inventory, this catalogue of things to be possessed. God gave him rank above this, when he made him a rational, moral, and immortal creature, constituting him lord over all inferior things. The fish and the fowl, the cattle and the creeping things re-registered for possession and use as articles of property; but man made in the image of God, made a little lower than the angels, and set over the works of the divine hand—is not placed in this category.

I add once more, that the Scriptures assign to the renewed man the moral image of his Maker. To this Paul alludes when he exhorts Christians to "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." This plainly refers to the moral image of God lost by sin, and reproduced by holiness. It exists only where piety exists, and is therefore not universal. It does not belong to man as man, but as a regenerate creature, as a Christian, having reference not to his nature but his character. That human beings are capable of having affections like those of God, that his glorious character may in kind become theirs, that they may be the imitators of God, that in this sense they may be his children, loving what he loves, and hating what he hates—all this conclusively proves the natural elevation and grendeur of their being. A creature that can take on the moral image of God, and thus walk before the universe in the spiritual robes of his Maker, possesses endowments that are angelic. A sinner is a stately temple in ruins. A saint glowing with the fervors of piety, is a lofty exhibition of what man may be. Human nature

is a golden censor that may be filled with heavenly incense. Piety in man is an image of God's moral beauties shining through the finite. A sanctified soul is the habitation of God through the Spirit. Such a possibility in even the lowliest form of humanity, proclaims alike the dignity of our birth and the glory of our nature. To be capable of such a life, such thoughts, sentiments, affections and emotions, as piety implies, is quite enough to settle man's claim to the consideration of heaven and the respect of earth. Such a being must be princely, whatever may be his condition. His capacities lift him very high in the scale of existence.

As the result of this brief exposition of man's origin, common nature, and likeness to God, I have impressed my own mind,—

In the first place, with the great wonder of his being.—He is indeed a marvellous creature. His history is a record of marvels. God was approaching the sublimest point in the drama of earthly creation, when he said,—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." But for this the earth had been a wilderness,—a huge physical mechanism, without an interpreter,—a mass of animate and inanimate forces existing and moving for no moral end. Man was needed to complete the divine programme of creation; and in due season he came. The catastrophe of Eden, involving the fall and ruin of the race, supplied the occasion for mighty counsels in heaven: it opened a new problem in the history of being; and to solve it, Jesus was needed, and in due season he came as God manifest in the flesh. Thus the man of creation, the man of history, and the man of redemption salutes us alike with the wonders of his own being and the interests which he has excited in heaven.

I am impressed, in the second place, with the importance of properly estimating human nature.—We are too prone to see man only on the surface—to look at his cottage or his palace, his rags or his robes,—to inquire more what fortune has made him, and less what God has made him—to mark the distinctions which separate men, rather than the affinities which unite them: I say we are prone to this grand mistake. The creature as God has made him, is forgotten; his claims as human, are outlawed; and the man is thrown into the back-ground, covered up, and concealed, while the king attracts the eye and rules the feeling. This is the common error of our perverted reasoning. We too much fail to see what we must see, if we would be philosophers, philanthropists, or Christians on an expanded scale. Let us correct this error. Let us drop the sounding line of thought to the very bottom of human nature. Let us go down to the essential reality, whether a Hottentot, an Esquimaux, an Australian, a Negro, a Frenchman, or an Englishman, be the specimen we survey. You can never explain the doctrine of rights on the

one hand, or of duties on the other, without going back to this primary view of man. Whether I have any rights, and owe any duties, depends upon what I am, and what others are, in the constitution of God. Whether morality be a universal system, or merely local and geographical, flexible, to be made to order, according to the taste of the customer, depends upon the view we take of the essential attributes of human beings. No one will feel its reality, appreciate its scope, understand its reasons, or heartily sympathize with its teachings, until he has properly estimated man. Those who scout the idea of rights as native and inalienable, having first ignored the distinctive features of human nature, reason correctly from their premises; yet their premises may well make angels weep.

I am impressed, in the third place, with the appropriate end of civil government —Like the Sabbath, it was made for man. Its object is to define, within a specified sphere, the rights and duties of man, defending the former and enforcing the latter, impartially applying its rules of action to all its subjects. Existing by the authority of God, and as to its form resting upon the assent of the people, government has in charge the sacred rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Our forefathers had this view of its nature; and having gained their independence of the British Crown, they established a government in this country upon the basis of human rights. They expounded man as a creature of rights, They committed themselves and their posterity to the doctrine of equal rights, as the chief corner-stone of the national edifice. They resolved that this theory for whose realization so many millions had sighed, should have a practical exemplification on this soil. They made it the motto of the hour. They inscribed it on the nation's banner:

> "When freedom from her mountain height,
> Unfurled her standard to the air,
> She tore the azure robe of night.
> And set the stars of glory there."

I love this government; I love to linger about its sacred altars; I love to think of the men who framed it. I love to walk up and down the broad and spacious avenues of the national Constitution, adorned as they are with a wisdom which seems to have been plucked from the skies; in this hour of peril I would be its friend even unto death; and my great reason for so feeling, is found in the fact, that our civil system is built upon the broad foundation of human rights. By this single principle I for one mean to stand without deviation, relaxation, or compromise with any foe. For traitors and rebels I admit into my creed but one remedy; and this is subjugation by the

force of arms, hesitating at nothing justified by the laws of civilized warfare, that may be necessary for the accomplishment of this purpose. If this demand the destruction of slavery as a military necessity, then so be it. I would do anything that a people can righteously do, to save such a government as this from ruin. This government is cheap at any price. You cannot pay too much for it. The principles upon which it is founded, are laid in eternal justice. I value it for commercial reasons; I value it because it binds the members of society together under the forms of law; I value it because it is the instrument of public thrift; but in its glory of Human Rights I see its purest glory, it is a free government, based on the rights of the individual man, and designed to be their protector. It is the nearest approximation to perfect justice that human wisdom ever realized. This to me is its great charm. The conspiracy that now seeks to destroy it, is the most wanton in its measures as well as diabolical in its principles, that has ever shocked the moral sense of mankind. I would put that conspiracy to flight, or die in the effort. On this subject I would have no conservative if, or cautious but, to weaken or qualify my resolution. If the nation lost twenty battles, then I would have it fight the twenty-first battle, and keep on fighting till its authority is established over every foot of the public domain. Short of this point I am not desirous for peace. I say frankly, that I am for war,—the war of righteous authority,—till treason dies, and law rules. I do not believe in that sham patriotism, or that milk-and-water theology, that clamors for peace "on any terms."

The views of man contained in this sermon, I remark fourthly, to my understanding, settle the question as to the moral nature of slavery.—There is something in the very word slave, that offends our sensibility, and calls forth the protest of our moral nature. We instantly put the idea on its defence. Who would be a slave? Freedom is the term of rhythm and magic in every human ear. It is the instinctive aspiration of every human soul. Eloquence and poetry can burn with a generous fire at the altar of freedom; but slavery is a mere matter of mercenary calculation Unfamiliar with the spectacle, we should all be shocked with the sight of a slave pen, where human beings are marketed to the highest bidder: yet let me say I have no objection to this scene, if the fundamental principle of slavery be right. I go farther and say, upon this supposition, that I have no objection to the slave trade whether it be foreign or domestic. My great difficulty with slavery lies with its fundamental principle. It is the chattel doctrine applied to human nature. The slave is an article of property held and possessed by his master, as much so as his horse or his house. This is

the very essence of the system as it exists in this country. Chancellor Kent observes, that "slaves are considered as things or property, rather than persons, and are vendible as personal estate," Hence all the ordinary incidents of property apply to the slave. He may be bought and sold, disposed of by will, inherited, seized by the sheriff and sold to pay his master's debts. The so-called claim to his service rests on the prior claim of ownership. The power to govern him proceeds on the same principle. The right of ownership to his descendants assumes the same doctrine. The whole system, from beginning to end, and in all its vital parts, is the property system forcibly applied to human beings

Is this right? Man being what he is, created in the image of God, made a rational, moral, and immortal creature, this being the nature of man, is slavery right? If it be right, if it be a just and appropriate treatment of a human being, then I should like to know what is wrong. The argument that is strong enough to prove the rectitude of slavery, is strong enough to destroy my faith in moral distinctions. I hold it to be wrong—a clear and manifest sin against the rights of human nature. It has all the properties of a wrong, all the corruptions of a wrong, and all the history of wrong. I should so judge if made its victim, and so would you; hence I am compelled thus to judge whoever may be its victim. Slavery began in wrong; it is wrong in principle, and so long as its principle is continued, it can be nothing but wrong. I am opposed to it for the same reason that I am opposed to sin. That the Negro is its victim, does not to me mitigate its offensive character in the slightest degree; for if the Negro be a man, then I have no more right to enslave him, than he has to enslave me. The argument which justifies Negro-slavery, justifies all slavery. The thing in principle is the same, whether the victim be black or white. Not long since I saw an article in the Richmond *Enquirer*, boldly proclaiming the doctrine that slavery was the true and normal condition of the laboring class, with out any reference to the question of race. What an apostacy from the faith of the Fathers, from the very first principles of morals, as well as from the teachings of our glorious Christianity, is involved in this monstrous proposition! And yet it is simply carrying out the doctrine of slavery to its legitimate results. If the thing be right in principle, then the question as to who shall be the master, or who the slave, is merely an accidental affair. Men of the same race may enslave each other. Indeed, the whole doctrine of Human Rights as set forth in the Declaration of American Independence, is absolutely thrown to the winds.

In the name of reason and reason's God, in the name of a

true Christian Democracy, I protest against this grossest of all errors. It outrages man, and justly provokes the wrath of Heaven. In the great political earthquake which is now shaking this nation to its very centre, I see, if I mistake not, the workings of a righteous Providence, teaching the American people the necessity, the duty, the wisdom and saftey of moral justice. God's providence is dealing with the slavery question. We cannot keep it out of this contest if we would Events are moving faster than our thoughts. Those who mean to reason from their old standpoints, especially those who still cling to the mere cry of "Abolition" as if the world were the end of all argument, will soon find themselves behind the age. I am no prophet; I cannot anticipate the future course of Providence in this great struggle; I have no desire to run ahead of Providence; yet nothing is clearer to my mind than that any settlement of our present difficulties, which falls short of the requirements of moral justice as expounded by the inalienable rights of man, will be delusive and transient. It will, I believe, lead to future and still more terrible convulsions. The question now is, not what the South will demand, or the North concede, but rather what God requires. God made the African, and gave him his rights as a man, whatever they are, greater or less; and these rights the nation must respect and defend, or there is no future before us but one of disruption, convulsion, anarchy and ruin. The events of the hour are carrying us back to first principles, and forcing upon us the stern philosophy of truth, which though crushed to the earth, will rise again, because the eternal years of God are hers.

I am willing that the statesman should exert all his skill to guide the Ship of State, as does the soldier all his powers to defend it; yet I seem to hear the voice of the Great Jehovah speaking out of this tempest to the statesman and the Soldier, yea, speaking to the whole nation, and saying,—"What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?" The great and imperative cry of the hour is, that we should practice the rules of justice, and settle this conflict upon the basis of justice. Here, and here only is our ultimate safety. This will give us peace—a righteous peace—a peace that is "first pure"—a peace in whose establishment the law of God reigns as the sovereign power. Long enough have we tolerated the sin of oppression; and sadly is the country now paying the penalty due to wrong. Let us now try to do right. This is always safe.

My hearers, I have thus spoken very plainly to you in regard to the principles of a true Christian Democracy. You are mostly strangers to me: I know not what your sentiments are; and let me add, that so far as my utterance is concerned,

... me what they are. On this subject I ... man. I have no secrets, Let me tell you ... are very dear to my heart: and these are, first, ... men, and secondly, the doctrine of Human Rights ... God to man made in his own image. As I ... the former, and not less the latter, I am looking ... eager desire for the downfall of slavery. I shall not ... over its grave. Though not wise enough project ... precise plan of the result, I am willing to accept that plan, ... what it may, to which a progressive Providence may point, and which will compass the end in the shortest possible time, and with the least amount of evil to all classes. That slavery is the great primal cause of this war, no one can reasonably doubt. It has been the chief bone of contention during nearly the whole history of this Government. We have had as good compromisers as the world ever produced; and yet they have all failed to settle the slavery question. The conflict between slavery and freedom is "irrepressible;" it ever has been, and it ever will be. Hence, if we desire a permanent peace in this country, we must as wise men seek the removal of this great evil. Providence is pointing in this direction, counselling and commanding an afflicted and suffering people to break the yoke of bondage and let the oppressed go free. God grant that we may have the wisdom to hear and obey the divine voice.

In conclusion, permit me to exhort you to support the National Government under which you are living, from which you derive your protection, and to which you owe the duty of allegiance. It is the duty of the Government to suppress this rebellion, and re-establish its own authority over every foot of the public domain. It is equally the duty of the people to sustain the Government, to replenish its treasury, to fill up the decimated ranks of the national army, and continue the struggle with unfaltering courage, till the broad banner of the nation's life shall triumphantly fling its folds to the breeze. In this hour of peril, in this time of war, let us be patriots rather than partisans. Let us first preserve the Union, by crushing the rebellion; and when we have done this, we can then if need be, attend to the minor questions of party politics. May the God of Heaven continue to prosper our cause, guide our President, inspire all the people with the spirit of patience and true loyalty, and in every contest of arms, give the victory to the national forces. This is as it should be, the patriot's prayer. Palsied be the arm, confounded be the brain, blasted the counsels, and utterly defeated the armies, that seek the destruction of this Government. May it live and last, the glory of this land, the bond of union among all the people, the sublime model for the imitation of the world, the hope of freedom, and

the dread of tyrants, as long as the sun and moon shall endure, so triumphant over all enemies, and so firmly fixed in the hearts of the people, that no traitor nor band of traitors will ever again question its supremacy, or seek its overthrow. Never before has the principle of Democratic Republicanism been tried on so great a scale, or under such signal advantages —never before has the trial been attended with such eminent success; and if now this principle be destined to fail on this soil, in this nineteenth century, under the broad blaze of our Christian civilization,—yes, if there be not sufficient intelligence, virtue and union among the people to break down this rebellion, and save the country from disintegration, anarchy, and ruin,—alas! if this be so, then, when or where will the doctrine of free government ever find another home on earth? Who shall re-kindle the light of this extinct orb? What hand shall gather the ashes of our fallen nationality? Where is the poet of the future to sing of our triumphs? Where is the orator to quicken the moral sense of the world by an appeal to our history? Such a nation in ruins is a spectacle that may well fill the world with mourning. God grant that no eye may ever see this spectacle!

SERMON XX.

BY REV. S. T. SPEAR, D.D., OF BROOKLYN, N.Y.*

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." MARK xvi. 15.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." TIM. ii: 15.

The first of these passages is the command of Christ, directing his apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel. The second is the counsel of Paul to Timothy in respect to the manner of performing this service. The preacher should, as a primary purpose, seek to approve himself unto God. He should also rightly divide the word of truth, so as to give to every man a portion of meat in due season. These rules should govern him in proclaiming the gospel of the Son of God to the children of men.

What is it to preach the gospel? Hearers of the word are not always of one mind as to the proper answer to this ques-

* Preached in the City of Niles, Michigan, August 9th, 1863, and published by request.

...ening to the same sermon, may, and often ...differently. To the one it seems very ...e and manner, and to the other entirely ... one it is a gospel sermon, and to the ...r differences of opinion is founded on the ...ogice as to what is meant by preaching the ...hrase does not represent, in their respective minds, ...ells.

...I repeat the inquiry, is it to preach the gospel? ...his question comprehensively, I should say that a ...eaches the gospel, who presents, expounds, applies and ...s any truth contained in the Bible, whether it be a fact ...rine, a precept or a promise, and whether too it be found ...he Old Testament or the New. "All Scriptures is given by ...piration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, ...correction, for instruction in righteousness." Any discourse that is based on the Bible, that explains the word of God, and that moves in accordance with its thoughts, is, in the general sense to be deemed a gospel sermon. The preacher may be too exclusive in the selection of his theme; he may mis-judge as to the time and occasion; he may err in making some things more prominent, and others less so, than God makes them in his word; he may not rightly divide the word of truth; he may, indeed commit very many mistakes in the details of this work; yet, if he preaches *from* the Bible, and preaches *what* the Bible contains, it is not just to say of him, that he does not preach the gospel. Perhaps he does not preach the whole of it at any one time, or always that portion of it which is most pleasing to some hearers; but this will not justify the charge that he his dealing with matters foreign to his commission. What God has placed in his Word for the reading and instruction of mankind, may, under the discretion of a sound and honest judgment be introduced into the Christian pulpit on the Sabbath day, or any other day. He who finds fault with this principle, is in reality finding fault with the Bible.

Passing now from this general statement to some of the special ideas which it embraces, I remark,—

In the first place, that preaching the gospel includes the defence of Bible truth.—We are directed to contend earnestly for the faith; and he who does so when the occasion calls for it, is in this way preaching the gospel. This contest, always conducted by spiritual weapons, and never by carnal, may be waged against heretics, who professing to believe the Bible, nevertheless pervert and mis-state its true meaning, and thus make themselves the propagators of error under the guise of the truth; or it may be waged against infidels who entirely reject the Scriptures as a divine revelation. In either case it is a

contest for the faith, in the one instance referring to the meaning of the Bible, and in the other to its authority.

There are times, too, in the history of the world, or in the condition of particular communities, when this mode of preaching is the very thing that is most wanted. Christ, in the days of his flesh, often preached in this way. Peter did on the day of Pentecost. It was a very common method with the great apostle of the Gentiles. A series of sermons showing the unscriptural character of the Unitarian heresy, or presenting the evidences of Christianity, or vindicating the Bible against the imputation of lending its approving sanction to any system of human oppression, being properly timed, may be the most effective method of preaching the gospel. The preacher who is not prepared to defend the faith, or who will not when the occasion demands it, is not a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Polemics, sharp and severe, logically unrelenting, and morally fearless, may be the duty of the Christian pulpit: and he who at such a crisis, shrinks from the task, is not faithful to his trust. The truth in either doctrine or morals is at stake; and the preacher who, fearing that somebody may take offence, adroitly manages to dodge the issue, is simply a coward, having more selfishness than conscience, more prudence than purity. If he is not competent to discuss the question, then let him for his own credit say so; but if he is, and will not, then he is entitled to no man's respect.

Those timid peace-men, who never like to meddle with debateable questions, are by no means to be taken as the best model of gospel-preachers. Sometimes these debateable questions are the very ones that ought to be meddled with. They are the questions in debate, and vast interests may be hanging upon the method of their settlement. So thought Martin Luther and John Calvin in the sixteenth century, and hence came the Protestant Reformation. So thought the Puritan preachers of England, and hence came that large amount of Christian literature, born in the seventeenth century, that thinking people so highly apppreciate in this age. So thought Jonathan Edwards, and hence the enduring moment of argument and Christian learning that makes his name so illustrious. Some of the most vigorous and valuable efforts ever made by the ministry of the word, have referred directly to the debateable questions of the hour. The time to defend God's truth is when it is in peril.

I observe, secondly, that preaching the gospel includes a statement of its historic facts.—To preach in this sense, is simply to tell a story, a true one, explaining if it need be, but always telling it,—reproducing the Bible narrative, especially that part of it which contains the history of Christ. Bear in mind that Chris-

tion. T… …ostract c…mptions, but
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approp… …acts in this system: and
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other … …nary who seeks to enlighten
fact. … …Christianity, must tell them
gosp… …They must have it before
the … …The preaching of the apostles,
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in … …is words, describing his actions,
… …is personal character,—thus giving
… …opportunity of seeing the wonderful
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… method of preaching. It consists in
… …e gospel,—facts that have a date, a
… …ing circumstances as bring them within
… It is a method of very great power, ab-
… …among those who are wholly ignorant,
… …even among those who are best informed.
… upon the sayings of Christ, or upon his
… …last days of Christ, or a series selecting
… …in his life or presenting his whole life in a
… …comprehensive review, or a series upon the pro-
… …fulfilled in him, or isolated and detached ser-
… …with any of the facts that form a part of the
… all this I take it, is preaching the gospel.
… …rmation to the ignorant, and awakens thoughtful-
… …those who, though not wholly ignorant, need to have
… …ered up by way of remembrance.
… true, that this historic and expository method
… too much neglected in our own age. The ten-
… many is towards essays, philosophical disquisi-
… performances, esthetic gratification, and sensa-
… rather than the facts in the life of Christ which
… …of inspiration has recorded for the permanent in-
… and impression of the world. Multitudes do not care
… studying the life of Christ, or indeed any part of
… history, it is too antiquated for their taste; and
… …little about hearing it from the lips of the
… …What they want, is something that is pop-
… well spiced with anecdote, glittering with rhe-
… and that will tell, for a moment or two, with
… …dramatic effect upon the nerves. This in their
… …preaching. It is lively. They can enjoy it for
… …and this is all they want. There may be no

Christ in it, and very little of the Bible in it; yet after all it is preaching. It is so called, and withal suits some hearers remarkably well.

I cannot for one regard this as a good tendency. It is not adapted to make Christians intelligent in the Bible sense, or impress the world with Bible realities. The plain truth is, the Bible is not sufficiently the source or the law of such preaching, nor is it sufficiently the nutriment of such hearing. The people are moved and entranced, not with the facts of the Sacred Scriptures, but with the skill and the genius of the orator. He sings a wonderful song, and they are as wonderfully delighted. They hear the man, and forget the God and the Christ whom they ought to hear through the man.

Preaching the gospel, I add thirdly, consists in a true and faithful presentation of its doctrines.—I have just spoken of its facts. I wish now to speak of its doctrines in distinction from its facts. If there be, as there certainly is, an historical Christianity, there is also a doctrinal Christianity. If for example, it be a fact that there was such a person as Jesus of Nazareth, there is also a doctrine in respect to this person. If it be a fact that this Jesus died on the cross, there is also a doctrine explanatory of this death. If it be a fact that Jesus wrought miracles, there is also a Bible doctrine as to the source and design of these miracles. The facts and the doctrines go together as inseparable parts of one system, being furnished by the same Book, and hence resting upon the same authority.

Some of the doctrines of Christianity are not peculiar to it, and therefore not distinctive of it. They are not exclusively dependant on revelation for their evidence. The doctrine of God as the Creator and Supreme Ruler of the universe,—the doctrine of a Divine Providence as evinced in physical and moral history of earth.—the doctrines of man as an accountable moral agent,—the general doctrine of human duty as growing out of our capacities and relations,—the doctrine of a future life,—the doctrine of man's actual state as a degraded and sinful being;—these doctrines are in the gospel system, and there set forth with great clearness and force; but they are also in nature, and hence discoverable by a proper exercise of reason. They belong to what is termed natural religion, being common to it, and that which is strictly revealed. To preach these doctrines is to preach a part of the gospel. They are certainly in the gospel. Wherever they may be, they are in this system. The God of nature and the God of the Bible are but one God,—made known to men in different ways. The future life which nature more than suggests, is identical with that disclosed in the Bible. Nature does not contradict the Bible, or reveal more than the Bible; yet the latter, while including

...are not in nature. They ...sense supernatural. They are ...the world within us, or the world ...sively upon the authority of reve-

...transcendental truths, that are not ...given to the world by the inspiration ...their own class, are the peculiar and ...Christianity. You find them in the ...them nowhere else. They are positive reve-...ene of God, and not mere resuscitations of ...let me give you some examples of this state-

...of Divine Persons in the essential unity of one ...essedly not a doctrine of reason. It is neither dis-...nor comprehensible by reason. Nature teaches no ...rine. It is purely a matter of revelation. We be-...because we find it in the Bible. It there appears under, ...personal designations of, Father, Son and Holy Ghost ...ught to our knowledge as an integral doctrine in the great ...glorious plan of human salvation. Explain it we cannot. What we have to do with it, is to believe it upon the authority of God's Word.

The *Theophany* of the Scriptures, or the doctrine of God in Christ, God manifest in the flesh, making Jesus human and divine, belongs to the same category. That this is the Scripture view of Christ, I shall now assume. I believe it upon the testimony of the Bible. Is there any other reason for believing it? None whatever. Though a very acceptable doctrine and wonderfully meeting human wants, it nevertheless stands exclusively upon the authority of revelation. The Bible says that Christ is God manifest in the flesh, and moreover, gives facts in the greatest abundance that harmonize with this view. Reason accepts the view because it has previously accepted the Bible as an infallible rule of faith.

The doctrine of *atonement* by the death of Christ, is another example of the same character. Had you been present when Jesus hung on the cross, and simply confined your reflections to what you could then see, you would have seen nothing to suggest an atonement for sin as the means for pardon and salvation to the guilty. You might have thought very well or very ill of the sufferer considered as a man; but limiting your vision to the scene before you, and making it the sole guide you would not have seen the doctrine of the atonement on that cross. The Roman soldiers did not. The Jews did not. Where do we get this idea? Not from reason; not from the analogies of nature; not by a process of inference from our own neces-

sities; but from those holy men who spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We there find that Christ died for our sins, the just suffering for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God; and this, as you see, lifts his death immeasurably above the rank of a mere tragedy. It puts it in relations to us and in relations to God, which are altogether above the reach of unaided reason.

The doctrine of justification by faith stands on the same ground. Abraham believed God, and his faith was imputed to him for righteousness. So says the Bible, giving an example of this doctrine. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." So said Paul to the jailor, applying the doctrine to the case of an enquiring sinner. "For Christ is the end of the law for rigtheousness to every one that believeth." So wrote the same apostle, stating the doctrine in its foundation and condition. Are these the utterances of reason? No; they are God's revelations to reason, conveying information which but for the revelations we should never have had. This glorious doctrine is God's and not man's. We do not learn it in the rocks or in the stars. We learn it only when we hear God in his Word.

The same is true in respect to the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, considered as the divine and efficient agent in the conversion and sanctification of human souls. I am aware that the facts, namely the conversion and sanctification, are in those souls as matters of personal experience; but aside from revelation teaching as God's gracious and special connection with them, we should never know anything about the doctrine of the Holy Ghost in the Bible sense. It is the Bible that tell us that we are born of the Spirit, and chosen through sanctification of the Spirit, and speaks of the graces of piety as the fruits of the Spirit. It is the Bible that warns us not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. It is the Bible that talks about God's giving the influence of the Spirit to them that ask him. For all our conceptions on this subject we are dependant upon what the Bible teaches; and outside of it we know just nothing at all.

These are examples of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. It is a peculiar system, supernatural in its source, and superhuman in some of its ideas. It is not simply a modification of natural religion; it is not Paganism purified; it is not reason refined; it is not the best thoughts of the world coming together by a species of elective affinity; but it is God's thinking given to men by the inspiration of special messengers, of whose divine commission the Deity makes himself the Deponent by the august power of miracles.

And just here it is, in these peculiar things which have so

the former, has some doctrines which are not in nature. T
are extra-mundane, and in this sense supernatural. The
not found in man or nature, in the world within us, or the
without us. They rest exclusively upon the authority
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Now, these, so to speak, transcendental truths, t
based on reason, but are given to the world by th
of God, and which are of their own class, are th
distinctive doctrines of Christianity. You fin
Bible, and you find them nowhere else. They
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natural light. Let me give you some exa
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self to mere hobbies; yet it is alike his province and his duty to present the moral inculcations of the Bible with a fearless and honest impartiality, any of them, or all of them, according to the demands of the hour, rebuking sin in high places as well as low, and calling upon all sinners to repent, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. In so doing he is preaching the gospel. Let me embody this general thought in two or or three specific forms.

There are certain duties which we directly owe to God as our common Creator, moral Governor, and gracious Benefactor; and there are also certain sins which are committed directly against the Supreme Being. On both of these topics the Bible descants at large. It as a plan with ample specifications of duty towards God; and so far as I know, all agree that duty in the strictly spiritual and religious sense is a proper theme for the Christian pulpit.

The Bible also presents a very wide range of duties that fall under the generic title of social morality, embracing all the general and all the special relations of human life, approving the right in these relations, and condemning the wrong. It teaches a Christian morality—Christian in its authority, motives and applications. It goes upon the supposition that all men are made of one blood with a common parentage human and divine, that they are bound together by the laws of benevolence and justice, and that to these obligations there are no exceptions, no licensed offenders who can break these laws without offending God and deserving his wrath. It has not one system of ethics for black men, and another for white men. The statute of love as laid down by the Saviour, and practically illusrated in the parable of the good Samaritan, is binding upon all men; and what we cannot do without breaking this statute, is forbidden by it. It is wrong. It is sin. It is contrary to the morality of the Bible. It displeases God; and unless repented of, it will provoke his vengeance.

What then shall the pulpit do with the Christian morality of the Bible? My answer to this question is this: The pulpit ought to preach this morality faithfully, fully, frequently, in the fear of God, urging it upon the consciences of men, and applying it to specific cases according to the demands and wants of the times—not dealing with simply obsolete questions, or showing great courage in killing dead lions, but keeping its moral utterance in close contact with the living matters of the passing age. This I understand to be preaching the gospel, not indeed its doctrines or its facts, but its practical part—its morality. It is not the only way of preaching, but one of the ways, and when needed by the special circumstances of men,

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which the… …take a liv… …ase
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…arked to me, that next to
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preached in times like these, when men want a Bible to stand upon, and a God to trust? Ah! my hearers, if it had been preached—if the Bible doctrine of the nature and obligations of civil government had been thoroughly understood throughout this country—if the odious character of treason had been properly exhibited—if the consciences of those who call themselves Christians, had been duly enlightened on this subject—if such men as Dr. Thornwell and Dr. Palmer had in thunder tones proclaimed God's doctrine to the Southern people, as Dr. Breckenridge did, and they did not; yes, if this had been seasonably done, to all human seeming, the North and the South would alike have been saved from the horrors of this bloody contest. It was not done, and I must think for one, that the pulpit, especially at the South, failed to do its duty in the most solemn crisis of American history. Demagogues and bad men ruled the hour. They were suffered to go unrebuked by the politics of Heaven. They sang the heresy of secession till they launched large masses of the Southern people into the terrible whirlpool of open treason.

But this is "preaching politics," I trust that no one in this audience will be alarmed at the idea. Every missionary who preaches against idolatry in countries where it is legalized by the laws of the land, commits this offence. He discusses a State-question, not in the light of partisan strife, but in the light of God's throne. A minister who in Utah should faithfully proclaim the law of God in respect to the marriage-relation, would be preaching politics, polygamy being a political institution of that territory. It is high time that these slang-phrases, "Preaching politics," "Religion has nothing to do with politics," "The pulpit must never touch a political question,"—had passed into disuse. There is no question that comes within the circle of Christian morals, which the pulpit may not in its moral aspects freely discuss, whether it be the present war, the institution of slavery, the subject of Temperance, or anything else. The fact that political parties are organized in reference to such a qestion, and passionately pursue their own ends, does not alter its nature, or cancel the rights or duties of the Christian ministry. God's Word is older than these parties, and very much better. It will stand long after they have ceased to breathe; and by it the pulpit is bound, and not by their notions.

The ordination-vow of every minister is to "preach the word," "to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." That word he finds in the Bible; and its moral inculcations bearing on any question of duty, form a part of the gospel as God has been pleased to write it for men. With politics in the sense of mere partyism, management, trickery,

just the way. To test this answer and [illegible] thousand
tice to the principle which it asserts, [illegible] odern dema-
that most intimately concerns us a[illegible] in the lan-
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on the part of those who hav[illegible] ole nature and
Government, and by them p[illegible] nciples of civil
and atrocious as the war i[illegible] ment, the pul-
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human bondage. It i[illegible] y are to pass in
that it was ever th[illegible] n, or expound their
war set on foot b[illegible] ians or editors of
rule in hell than [illegible] of the Christian pul-
city of New Y[illegible] utterance, who often
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that i[illegible] the pulpit preach their
th[illegible] well. Let the minister of
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[illegible] harge him with preach-
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s have their place and time in the system of gospel
saint in affliction or in death, I would preach the
ting the promises of the Bible. To a sinner
way of life, I would say,—"Believe on the
nd thou shalt be saved." To a traitor plot-
e and happiness of civil society, I would
ving,—"Let every soul be subject unto
r there is no power but of God: the
ned of God. Whosoever therefore
the ordinance of God; and they
themselves damnation." This would
el in each case. It would be rightly
truth. The principle is a plain one.
se that Providence presents, and when it is pre-
as it is presented. Apply God's truth to it. This
aching the gospel. Let nothing divert the ministry from
its sacred work. Let no fear of man or love of human ap-
plause induce the ambassador of Christ to withhold the truth
of God. Let that morality to which the Deity has affixed his
own autograph, glow on the lips of the Christian ministry; and
this will be a wiser and better world. The gospel in its
fullness and its purity, is the sheet anchor of all our interests—
the great blessing of man in this life, and his only hope for the
next.

THE PRAYER-MEETING

For the Prayer-Meeting.

FULTON STREET PRAYER-MEETING.

THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

THE high honor and great blessing which God has put upon this instrumentality of his praying people, calls for devout gratitude and record. The sixth anniversary of this meeting was held in the North Dutch Church Fulton street, on Wednesday, Sept, 23. Every part of the spacious edifice was filled, and the exercises were of a deeply interesting character. The meeting was opened with singing, prayer, and the reading of a portion of Scripture, after which Rev. Dr. Tyng, who presided, made some appropriate introductory remarks. In the midst of that wonderful outpouring of the Spirit of grace and supplication throughout our land, six years ago he turned the hearts of a few of his saints to meet together at the noon hour, and from that time to the present, he had blessed them with abounding tokens of his presence, not only answering prayer in blessing upon our own land, but in pouring out his Spirit in other lands. They would be the most unfaithful of all people if they doubted or

glorious presence of God as that remarkable meeting had manifested it that day. Who could count the blessings that had fallen upon God's chosen? who could tell the hearts that he had comforted and strengthened? who could count the spirits from whose eyes he had wiped the tear? who could number the distressed ones he had lifted up from the dust, and set them upon the rock? who would be able to tell the plans of his grace as angels rejoiced over sinners turning to God, and the Church of God had felt the blessedness of his divine appearing, making them grow as the vine, and cast forth their roots as Lebanon? The Fulton street prayer-meeting was a living token of the everlasting fidelity of the redeeming plan. No one touched those sacred precincts without going back saying: "What hath God wrought?"

ADDRESS OF REV. DR. RICE.

We live, said Dr. R., in a day of great things. One of those strange things was the Fulton street prayer-meeting. He did not believe that there has ever been just such a meeting upon the face of the earth—a prayer meeting kept up with constant interest for six years, in the midst of war, and its anniversary attended with such a crowd showing not only by their presence, but by their very expression of the countenance, the deep and heartfelt interest there is in it, thus giving a pledge that it shall celebrate another and another anniversary. Whatever may be dark (and there was much that was dark in the land) in the Church, and in the world, still there must be light when such a meeting could be sustained. The tide of religious feeling was so strong six years ago that it swept over the entire land, and in the West the largest hall in one of the large cities was scarcely sufficient to hold the crowds that came: but now the interest had abated. He hoped that the time was not distant when the Spirit of God would be poured out, and union prayer-meetings would be again established throughout the country. The country needed nothing so much as a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost.

ADDRESS OF DR. CUYLER.

The remarks of Dr. Cuyler had a local and practical application to the condition of things in the city of New York. He said this anniversary commenced at the opening of another year of Christian labor. The pastors of our city churches, and the tens of thousands of working Christians, had been out for a few months on their furlough, but now they were mustering back again into service for a new spiritual campaign. On their return they saw two new sights—one was the beautiful parks of our city being made the place of occupation of soldiers sent here for the purpose of keeping "the dangerous class" from making a disturbance, and the other spectacle was the charred remains of fires kindled by incendiary torches of New York's "dangerous classes." Of

the civil bearing of that matter he had nothing to say, but he asked the Christians of New York, if God ever sent a more thrilling and tremendous sermon for city christianization, and earnest, prayerful, evangelical work, than was found in those two astounding events. There was no "dangerous class" here except they were dark and depraved, and the "dangerous class" in New York were made so by the want of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Danger was the other side of the equation of depravity. It was the work, the privilege and the duty of Christians as they came back for a new year of labor, to determine that they will be one before God in an earnest effort to evangelize this city, to save its souls from destruction and to glorify the Lord our Saviour. New York was one great home, with a hundred thousand rooms in it. Some persons in the Fifth avenue may be living in the parlors, and some in the Five Points and the Hook may be living in the cellar; some were working for their living in the kitchen, and some were toiling in the workshop; some were up in the dark and unvisited attics, and some were down in the coal-hole; but they were all in one house, and one family occupied it. If they would save the city, there was much to be done. On looking over that vast assemblage, he asked if there was nobody come back to the city determined to work as he never worked before. Were there no Isbella Grahams in the galleries? No Harlan Pages in the pews? they had not purses that the war had made longer, so as to shame every donation they ever made? was there none in that assembly who would start another Sunday-school class? He exhorted them to determine in that blessed house of prayer, at the foot of that altar of devotion, to do as Jacob did—to give the heart, the voice, the purse the prayer, the blessed toil, for some of those dark, dangerous, degraded, dying ones who lived only in another room of the great one hundred-roomed house of New York. Then, when they met at the next anniversary, they would have a blessed offer of thanksgiving to present to the Master.

DR. ANDERSON'S ADDRESS.

Dr. Anderson said that prayer was mightiest when the man was weakest; when we could send a cry to God from an empty heart; when we found neither reliance upon ourselves nor on the arm of flesh, but from a sense of abandonment we could pour one earnest plea into the ear of Christ. His (the speaker's) heart had been moved as he heard the calls for consecration, and as he felt the absence of those peculiar influences of the Holy Spirit that were so largely enjoyed in 1857, '58, and '59. He felt like offering earnest prayer to God in behalf, not only of our own city, but of our own land. When they looked over the vast amount of wickedness in the city, and when they saw the little that seemed to be effected,

leading Christians to the horns of the altar. Was he not teaching us that our power was entirely impotent? and was he not saying to every one who has an interest at the throne of grace: "My child, your weakness prompts your prayer; wont you go into your closet?" In conclusion, Dr. Anderson urged the congregation to win the appellation of *Israel*, who was a prince with God, wrestled and prevailed.

After prayer by Rev. Dr. Marsh, and singing the hymn, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," The Rev. Dr. Porter, the able editor of the Christian INTELLIGENCER, addressed the meeting. He said the angel of the covenant in early times manifested himself to the chosen, but in the fulness of time Jesus Christ, the "brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." was found in fashion as a man, that he might manifest God unto us and raise us up into fellowship with the divine. And when Jesus entered into the vail and sprinkled the mercy-seat with his own blood previous to his ascent, he promised the Holy Spirit to be poured out, and in fulfilment of that promise on the day of Pentecost three thousand were converted: but that was only the beginning of this spiritual dispensation. It was right for the Church to anticipate that in growing years and in enlarged experience there should be fuller exhibitions of the power of prayer, and he was sure that there was no exaggeration in saying that the triumphs of grace, the trophies of redeeming love connected with the Fulton Street prayer-meeting, would far exceed those of the first day of Pentecost. When this meeting was organized, it was established with a simple evangelical purpose. In 1857, when the brethren came together they met not with any sectarian, donominational, or personal aims, but they assembled remembering that Jesus Christ had said: "Father, I pray that they all may be one, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." There was a Christian unity characterizing the Fulton street meeting that had never been disturbed—When he looked over the audience who had an interest in the meeting, and remembered the tens of thousands throughout the country who had been benefitted by this instrumentality he felt a constant tide of thanksgiving was going up to God, which only anticipated the joy and praise that would be felt and uttered in the upper sanctuary when those who had been saved in answer to prayer would meet upon the mount of God. In answer to prayer offered in the Fulton Street daily meeting, children had been given to mothers, husbands to wives, and what to some would appear miraculous, requests for persons at a distance in different localities had been answered. No cunning machinery had been used to draw men to the sacred convocation day by day, and although the

meeting was under the special guardianship of the corporation of the church founded by the early settlers of this island there has not been a narrow, sectarian thought in the bosom of the men who had charge of the meeting. When they came up to heaven to celebrate the anniversary of the redeeming love of Christ, there would then be the fulfilment of the promise—they who are one in Christ shall be one with him in glory.

REV. DR. NEWMAN'S ADDRESS.

After touching on the great historic of the church in the day of Pentecost, and in the days of Constantine, Luther, Calvin, John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards, who rose up to preach the great truth of personal holiness, and to spread Christian holiness over these lands, on that anniversary occasion they should ask themselves, "what were the great truths evolved six years ago, and had they reaped the full advantages of that gracious revival?" The truth was demonstrated in 1857, that the gospel could reach all classes, and that their salvation was practicable. As memory went back and recalled that halcyon hour when soldiers, merchants, and labourers, when men, women, and children, in the morning, and especially at the noon-day hour leaving their avocations, their domestic duties, and their schools, flocked to the house of God, a beautiful type was furnished of what the church was to be when the millenial glory would dawn upon us. They ought to feel that the divine Jesus was sufficient to do his great work, and that the gospel has within itself an underlying power, a divine energy to reach the masses of the people, be they moral or immoral, exalted, or base learned or ignorant. In the revival of 1857 this truth was also demonstrated, that the laymen of the church were not only the legitimate co-operators of the minister, but the co-operators of the Lord Jesus Christ. The history of the Christian Church showed, in all seasons of declension, ministerial usurpation and isolation and lay inactivity and seclusion. Ministers could not save the world. They were the medium of the truth, but it was by the united effort of lay men and women of all classes that the world was to be converted. In that hour many talents were exhumed; men of princely intellect, of education, of personal influence. and of affluence in society—men who had occupied positions in the Church, but whose voice had never been heard in public—came forth, and they were surprised at the amount of talent and piety in the laity of the Church. He trusted that they would remember these great truths and carry them out in practical life, so that in the years to come, standing fast in the faith, firm in the truth, and working efficiently in this great cause, they might see again thousands of people crowding to the portals of the church of our Divine Lord.

ADDRESS OF G. H. STEWART, ESQ.

He said he came to bring to the brethren of the Fulton street meeting the tribute of thanksgiving and of praise of the Philadelphia noon-day prayer-meetings, who in the providence of God, intended in a few days to celebrate the anniversary of their six years of united, fervent, earnest prayer to God for his blessing to descend upon the of Church of Christ, and upon a lost and ruined world. All the noon meetings had not been suspended, for in the city to which Dr. Rice referred, he not long since attended one of the best daily prayer-meetings held in our whole country. As the providences of God were being developed in the struggle now going on in our country for the maintenance of the best Government that God had ever given to man, he understood the history of the Fulton street meeting as he never did before; he could understand why it was that that little band were led by God's Spirit to commence in the adjoining building a meeting for prayer; he could understand the divine message of the sainted son of the President (Dr. Tyng) to stand up for Jesus; but it was when he went down into the great armies of our country, who were standing up manfully for the "Old Flag," that he understood the history of the daily prayer-meetings.

Ministers were complaining of the absence of God's Spirit from the sanctuary, but blessed be God, he heard no such complaint come up from the hosts who were gathered in battle array in defence of our country. A returned delegate sent out by the Christian Commission said that he never met men so near the cross of Christ as the soldiers who were fighting the battles of our country. This was a large meeting in the emporium of the West, at the mid-day hour, but he could take them to a meeting, held three times each day, larger than it, all composed of men wearing the uniform of the United States soldier. The average attendance was from one to two thousand immortal souls, anxious to seek Jesus, and to speak a word for their blessed Master. The Church of Christ in America should wake up to the important fact that God by his wonderful providence has opened up to her the greatest missionary field that ever was presented to any Church. It was not in far-off India or China, but it was composed of sons brothers, fathers, and husbands who were risking life, that we might continue to enjoy the blessed privileges we possess.

Last evening he received a letter from the wife of a major-general in Gen. Rosecrans' army transmitting fifty dollars to aid in spreading the gospel of Christ, as a testimonial of what he owed for the labors put forth which, under God, resulted in the conversion of that gallant general, who was leading one of the corps against the combined hosts that were trying to overthrow our Government.

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SERMON XXI.*

BY REV. THOMAS H. STOCKTON,

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THE CORONATION OF LOVE IN THE CHURCH.

1st Cor. xiii: 14.*

Last Sabbath night, after a notice of the equal immortality of Faith, Hope, and Love—we came to the subject of the Coronation of Love; proposing to consider it as related to the Heart, to the Church, and to Heaven. The first of these relations was then treated; and the second, of course, is in place on the present occasion. May the Holy Spirit direct the discussions of it.

Alas! here, too, our tears fall upon the silver trumpet; before it is lifted to our lips for the rallying blast of the Lord. For here, also, is a melancholy history, which must be at last generally indicated and acknowledged, in order to appreciate the necessity for the inauguration of a new power.

Let no one, however, suppose, that it is my design, by a sort of volcanic passion, to throw up a great rocky cone, which may attract

* Delivered in the Capitol, May 11, 1862. For the first discourse, see April number of the National Preacher.—Editor.

all the vapours of heaven, and darken the trembling landscapes with the additional terrors of cloud and storm. No, no; I would not dread, indeed, the most convulsive truth; but my delight is in the highest and clearest sky, the serenest and purest air, and the widest and fairest vision, of grandeur, beauty, and peace. Still, if it seem good to JEHOVAH, to come down upon the mountain that burns "with fire," in "blackness, and darkness, and tempest," with "the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words"—I say again, that, awful as the Desert may be, I choose to be there, that I may learn the will of God from His own mouth, even though like Moses, I "exceedingly fear and quake." But, if it please my Father to allow me to "come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to GOD the JUDGE of all, and to the spirit of just men made perfect, and to JESUS the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel." I confess that I feel more safe, more happy, and more at home in the City than in the DESERT, and ought, therefore, to be more disposed, in gratitude as well as in reverence, to see that I "refuse not him that speaketh."

What, then, has been the true history of the Church? What do its original and inspired records report? What do later and uninspired records report? Does even this department of human progress reveal the attainment of perfection? Not at all.

I remember, indeed, with great joy, certain exclamations of the Old Testament, which are often applied to the Church. For instance, the 48th Psalm, commencing thus: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the City of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the City of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." And again, in the close of the same Psalm, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God, forever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." In like manner is the opening of the 87th Psalm: "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O, City of God."

But, while I recall such passages, I cannot avoid the recollection of the frequent sad vicissitudes—the general melancholy fortune of both the political and spiritual Israel of the olden time. And I find, on closer examination, that the Inspiring Spirit is constrained,

in most instances, to turn away from the depressions of the present to a contemplation of the glories of the future. Therefore, such language as the following: "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord." (Ps. 102.) And again: "For the Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." Therefore, too, such prayers as the following: "Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."

I remember, however, with still greater joy, the numerous and more literal declarations of the Tew Testament, in relation to the dignity and excellency of the Church. My whole being sympathizes with them, and responds to them. Without the slightest hesitancy, I proclaim the sentiment—that the Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is infinitely the noblest institution in existence.

How cheering it is, for example, to hear the Son of God, with so much resolution and affection, calling the church his own church. "My Church," said He, "My Church." When Peter, by inspiration from the Father, confessed the Divine Sonship of Christ—"upon this rock," replied his Lord and Master, "will I build my church; and then added the gracious assurance, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

And how exalted, also, is the language in which his apostles describe the Church! Hearken to Paul, addressing the Ephesians: "The Father of glory"—"hath set him, (i. e., Christ) at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." In this passage, the illustrative figure is the human body. The distance between the head and feet, represents vast gradations of authorities, both in the Church and the world, under the supreme sovereignty of Christ. Christ himself is the Head. The Body, under the Head, is the Church--which, being thus dependent upon Him, is, of course, His Body—"the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." That is—the fulness of its members, completes His person; and His Spirit fills all the members, to all their extremities, and in all their motions. His eyes see for the

whole body; His ears hear for the whole body; His tongue speaks for the whole body; He thinks, and feels, and acts for the whole body. Itshands are His hands; its feet are His feet; all its organs are His organs. Such is the intimate, the essential relation of Christ to the Church. He thoroughly identifies Himself with it. He is a formal part of it; and the life of the whole of it. To speak literally, the ministers and the people in the church, numerous and various as their official relations may be, are all, from the highest to the lowest—subordinate to His control. He is the head over all, from the embroidered neck to the sandalled and dust-covered feet.

But I spoke of the authorities of the world, as well as those of the Church. Where are these put, according to this figurative representation? I answer—they are put under foot. I do not suppose that our translators were afraid to say this; but certainly the Word of God may be better understood, in some respects, in our circumstances, than it was likely to be in theirs. I am jealous of some of the italics in our version. Most of them, it may be, are important to the full expression of the sense; but some of them seem to impair the sense. For instance, the word "things," occurring twice in this passage, ought, I think, to be omitted in both cases. It makes the meaning general and vague; instead of appearing as the Apostle seems to have designed it, specific and sure. Hark! "The Father of glory"—"hath set Christ far above all—principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world (or age), but also in that which is to come, and hath put all"—"not all things, but all these principalities and powers—"under his feet, and gave him to be head over all,"--not all things, again, but all these same principalities and powers—"head over all" these "to the church;" or, for the advantage to the church—that is, in plain terms, God sat Christ far above all the worldly powers of Judaism and Heathenism, as they then existed; and also above all other worldly powers that should come into existence, when Judaism and Heathenism should both be overthrown, and Christianity should be established on their ruins—and, not only so, but He has absolutely put these worldly powers under Christ's feet, i. e., under the church—under even the lowest departments of the church, or the lowest organs of His body.

Here, then, is the Divine Order: First, Christ—Secondly, the Church—Thirdly, the World—Christ, above the Church, and the Church above the World—or, reversing the order, the World under the feet of the Church, and the Church under the Headship of Christ.

True, it may be said, in objection to this view of the Church—

that history scarcely sustains it; but, I answer, that it does not depend for its proof on history alone, but on prophecy also. History and prophecy, taken together, abundantly sustain it.

As to history, let me ask—What has become of the worldly powers of Judaism and Heathenism, as they existed in the opening of the Christian Era? Where have they been for the last fifteen hundred years? How soon were they put under the feet of Christ and the church! And, even as it relates to the worldly powers which at first succeeded the breaking up of the vast Roman dominion; and the multiplied States of more modern times, and even of the current age,—is it not obvious that the subduing and controlling element in them all, however grossly perverted, has been, and is still, nominally at least, the Christian element?

If, however, regarding the matter historically, "we see not yet all things put under him"—as the Apostle declares, speaking particularly of Christ—nevertheless, regarding it prophetically, we are indubitably assured that they all will be put under him—for it is expressly recorded that "He must reign until all His enemies are put under His feet"—the last of whom, even death, shall not be able to resist His omnipotent command.

The passage on which I have thus dwelt, is only one among many in the New Testament, descriptive of the high position and relations of the Church. It is styled, "The Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." It is said that "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." That "the Lord" cherisheth "the Church;" and that God is to be glorified "in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." It is also most charmingly described as "one whole family in heaven and earth;" as though no interference of absence, or death, or distance, or any thing else, could have any effect in its essential and eternal unity. Nor can they have. All other institutions are earthly and mortal. The church, and the church alone, is immortal—heir at once to both earth and heaven.

But, great as is the joy with which I regard the representations of the church in the Old and New Testaments, confess that its actual history, especially as reported by later, uninspired, and yet trustworthy records, falls so far short of what ought to have been witnessed, as to become exceedingly mournful.

As I stand, and contemplate the scene, I scarcely know how to proceed. Shall I speak of the true church; the spiritual church; the invisible church; the one, undivided, universal and perpetual church? If so, I shall be greatly relieved, for the church, thus understood, has always retained its connexion with Christ, as its head; all its members have been subordinate to His authority;

and the world, virtually if not formally, has been under its feet. But this would be apart from my object. I wish to do some good to the ostensible church; the natural church; the visible church; the manifold, divided, sectional, and temporary church. Therefore, I must submit to some pain; for this church has not always retained its connexion with Christ, as its Head; its members have not always been subordinated to his authority; and the world, instead of being under its feet, has too often trodden upon it, and triumphed over it.

Now, here, just as we found it to be among individual men, so it is among the visible churches. Some are great and others small. And here, too, I have sentiments to express, in relation to the several classes, similar to those which were uttered on a former occasion.

I am an admirer of great churches. I cannot help it. They appeal to certain susceptibilities of my nature, which are easily impressed, and quickly respond to their call.

I think, first, of the Ancient churches, and especially of those, which, after all their dismemberments, still retain the name of Catholic—the Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic, churches. I think of their asserted Antiquity, dating even from the time of the Apostles. I think of their extent—not, of course, separately Catholic, or yet unitedly Catholic, but, notwithstanding, so obviously immense, both in space and population. I think of their alliance with renowned and imperial States; and of their occasional haughty supremacy over them. I think of their magnificent and splendid hierarchies, with the palaces that shelter them, the galleries that amuse them, the gardens that refresh them, the retinues that attend them, and the revenues that enrich them. I think of their hosts of dependent, obsequious, and ubiquitous agents, with the central retreats that supply them, and the boundless plans that employ them. I think of their gorgeous cathedrals and solemn rituals, with the accompanying enchantments for every sense, and temptations to every passion. I think of their venerable universities, reposing among the endowments of ages; illustrious with the genius and learning of their ample faculties, and everywhere strengthened by the position and influence of their graduates, and the ever-enlarging relations of their new successions of students. I think of the comprehensiveness and variety of the social classes assembled in their communion; from the monarch on his throne, his counsellors, courtiers, and nobles, down, through all intervening gradations, even to the humblest soldier, sailor, laborer, pauper, serf, or slave. I think, moreover, of their silent and saved cities of the dead, around all their temples of the living, and of the blended affections of subject nations in the mightiest attachments

of ancestral memory and heavenly hope, which no current oppression is strong enough to break. And, as I think of these and other imposing distinctions, I cannot be insensible to the profound impression of the incomparable power, which such a survey so naturally occasions; and, as power, mere power, whether for good or evil, is always admirable, I cannot but admire it here.

And yet, with this glance at the greatness of the Ancient churches, when I ask myself the question—How have they used their power? Who can wonder that I grieve and weep?

True, there is just reason for some restraint in my utterance here. That is—whatever incidental good has been accomplished by these Ancient churches, by taking the places of prostrate States, and rescuing society from lawless anarchy; by checking the ferocity, enlightening the ignorance, refining the manners, and changing the religion of overwhelming hordes of Barbarian invaders; or, by preserving the literature, both sacred and profane; and, to some extent, the arts, of the olden civilization, for revival and improvement in the new, or in any other way of public benefit—should be unguardingly and even generously acknowledged. More particularly should any more personal, direct, and saving influence of their holy men, in honest fulfillment of the offices of piety and benevolence, be held in grateful recollection. And, moreover, even the tyranny, frauds, exertion, and persecutions, which have so strongly marked their general progress, should not be attributed to mere demoniac malice—or unmitigated love of evil. In all such connexions there is a proper demand for discrimination.

But, after all just allowances are made, when the question is renewed—How have these churches used their power? I feel that it is impossible to return any other than a mournful answer. It should have been used in love to God and man, in pure, disinterested, sacrificial, Christ-like love. But has it been so used? Alas! if the tyranny, frauds, extortions, and persecutions already alluded to, do not prove sheer demoniac malice, it is at least indisputable that they are utterly inconsistent with Christian love. The plain truth is, that the same great Antichrist of Self, which we saw to be the curse of individual man, is also the curse of the church. Self in the heart is like a household idol; but Self in the church is the Juggernaut of Nations baptized—the horrid monster image of the whole Christian world. Especially, the entire system of false authority, in the Catholic churches, has been forged, during the lapse of ages, part by part, to meet the exigencies of Self. Self has fabricated their creeds, complicated their governments, and multiplied and mystified their ordinances—adding article to article, canon to canon, and sacrament to sacrament, as the increase

of its majesty, and the improvements of its possessions, the expense of its pleasures, and the state of its funds demanded. So, for a thousand years, or more, "the man of sin" stalked abroad over the earth, in the guise of the church, as Lord and Master of the globe. But his head was Self, and his body was the world, and the true church—the witness of Christ, and of the open Bible, and of the free conscience, was either actually severed, and trampled in dust and blood, or driven as a panting fugitive to hide in the caverns of the mountains. Even to this day similar scenes are witnessed—though within comparatively narrow limits. Had it not been for the Reformation, doubtless all other modern improvements would have been subjected to the same relentless oppression, or else utterly destroyed. And, with all my admiration of power, I cannot but believe, that, if the self-denying Nazarene should re-appear, as he appeared of old, with the same personal and official claims, the same doctrines and precepts, and the same lowly Galilean attendance, he would be as certainly and ruthlessly rejected by these Ancient churches as He was by the Jews. Ancient as they are, and though they have looked back, as long as the Jews looked forward, to the Messiah, it might be said again: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Extended as they are, incomparably more so than were the Jews, still it might be repeated throughout all their boundaries: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." What would their hierarchies be to Him, with all their palaces, galleries, gardens, retinues, and revenues! What would their ubiquitous agents be to Him, with all their supplies and all their plans! What would their cathedrals and universities be to Him! Which of their social classes would commune with Him! Which of their cities of the dead, though professedly full of the relics of His martyrs, would afford Him even a Gethsemane, in which to hide His agony; a calvary in which to expire, without a broken bone; or a rocky cleft, in which His corpse might rest through the hours of Sabbath peace? Alas! to speak particularly of the Church of Rome, as more arrogant and intolerant, if not more superstitious or idolatrous than the Greek—its constitution and history alike constrained the presumption: that the Pope, surpassing the High Priest, would issue infallible bulls, flaming with anathemas against the Anointed Son of God; that the cardinals, equalling at least the Sanhedrim, would plot his destruction in their secret conclaves; that every Bishop in his diocese would be on the watch, ready at a moment's warning, to lay hands upon Him; that the Jesuit spies would track his steps to His remotest retreats, and that the Inquisition, if at last it should arrest Him, would subject him to torture in its subterranean cells, and then

lead Him forth to the multitude, crowned and robed with painted devils and fires of hell, and so burn Him at the stake, and scatter his ashes on wind and wave, as an "auto du fe," or acts of faith.

And why is there reason for such an awful presumption as this? Not because man is naturally worse in the Ancient than in the Modern churches; not because there are no spiritual men in the Catholic, as well as in the Protestant communions; but, because, speaking of them as great organic dominions, Self has seized their thrones; and, for its own advantage, has pledged all its powers, and the powers of all its political allies, to the maintainance of doctrines and practices so contrary to Christ and His Gospel, that, in their presence, and supposing them to be true and right, Christ would appear as Antichrist; and His Gospel as the grandest heresy that ever arose, to distract and destroy the world. In a word, if the Roman and Greek churches—and all that symbolize with them—be the Divinely and authorized exponents and exemplars of Christianity, as history reports them, and as mankind still behold them; if the Peerless Love described in this Golden Chapter, the love which irradiates earth and heaven, time and eternity, and glorifies at once both man and angels, Christ and God—if thus, love be indeed already crowned and enthroned at Constantinople, or St. Petersburg, and at Rome,—then what we, as Protestants, understood by Christianity, ought to be put down, and that, of course, according to precedent, by the combination of all Catholic Authorities against us, with all the terrors of fire and sword.

But now, let us glance, in like manner, at Protestant churches. Some of these are great—others small. Taken in whole, I admire them. Taken separately, I admire many of them. I suppose we can all unite in saying, that we honestly and earnestly love them all.

Their foundation of principles, certainly, are worthy of all commendation, These are—that the Bible is the Book of God; and private judgment the duty and right of man. Upon these principles, various Ecclesiastical Systems have been built, as might have been expected; and as, in some sense, would seem even desirable. The chief fault to be found with them is, that, in some respects, many of them, at least, are at variance with the principles on which they rest. That is, they formally or virtually deny the sufficiency of the Bible and private judgment—introducing certain extra decisive, exclusive, and therefore, as it seems to me, false authorities. Were it not for these, there would be far greater hope of unity and efficiency in the conversion of the world.

The great Protestant churches are—the Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican; the Lutheran prevailing in Prussia, and several smaller German States, as well as in Denmark, Sweden, and Nor-

way; the Reformed, in Switzerland, Holland, Scotland, and among the comparatively few French Protestants; and the Anglican, not only in England itself, but also throughout the vast Colonial dependencies of the British Empire. Each of these, moreover, is represented by a sympathetic confederation in our own country. In Europe, they are all connected with the State; and in some cases, are formal State establishments. For instance, in Sweden, Lutheranism is a regular Episcopal State Establishment; in Holland and Scotland, Calvinian Presbyterianism is a State Establishment; and again, in England, what may be styled Cranmerian Episcopalianism is a State Establishment.

Before the smaller Protestant churches are noticed, I would like to pause here, and intimate at least the tremendous power of the great ones; and then inquire, as in relation to the Catholic churches—How have they used their power? But, there is not time for such a detail. Suffice it to say—so far as unfaithfulness is attributable to these Princes of Reformation; so far as they have suffered because of it; so far as Rationalism, or Erastianism, or Romanism, or downright Infidelity, has invaded their precincts and desolated their strongholds; so far, in a word, as the love of God and man has declined among them—in just so far, the cause is the same which has appeared in other connexions, the enthronement of the Antichrist of Self, and the consequent open shame, or renewed crucifixion of the Son of God.

But, let us turn to the smaller Protestant churches—going back—for the principles, if not the names demand it—to the Waldenses and their compeers, to the Lollards, the Bohemian Brethren, and the Moravians, and so coming down again to the Baptists, the Independents, the Friends, and the Methodists. To these, if there were time for it, I would gladly add the title of every sect, however recent or apparently insignificant, that is nevertheless dignified by the profession of constraint of conscience, and honest zeal for the honor of Christ and the rights and privileges of His people. Often, indeed, I lament when I see the humble retreats of Christian parties yet feeble, and therefore despised or neglected; and compare theirs with the costly temples of their richer and more fashionable brethren—who, after all, in the sight of God, have haply little reason for the pride and scorn they sometimes so unkindly display.

I say again, that true Christians love them all. If they are tempted to do otherwise, they determined, that, by the grace of God, they will love them all, and so at last, they love to love them all.

But now, if, with all these parties before me; nay, if, with the Hundred Protestant sects all in full view to the eye of my mind at

least—I ask myself the question—What has been their general history? How have they used the power which God has granted them? What must be the answer?

CAN I say—OUGHT I to say—is it POSSIBLE FOR ANY ONE to say, IN TRUTH—that ALL of them, that the MOST of them, that ANY ONE of them has yet made FULL PROOF OF LOVE TO GOD AND MAN?

My Brethren! believe me. I fear a censorious spirit. I fear a cesorious tongue. Much more, I dread a treacherous spirit; a treacherous tongue, a lying spirit, a lying tongue. Especially, I sometimes dread, lest one, comparatively destitute of certain faith in Christ, and of assured hope, and of disinterested love—should speak of others with seeming harshness, who, in these as in many more relations, are infinitely his superiors in the sight of the heart-searching Judge. Moreover, even when I cannot avoid the conviction of abstract wrong, I often wonder whether it may not be, that, as the occasions of divisions among Protestants are often of little moment in themselves—so little that I am forced to say in my own conscience that I could join every Evangelical sect in Christendom: belonging to them all at once, and laboring with them cordially for the promotion of the Gospel; if they would so far acknowledge my Christian and Ministerial character as to admit me to their communion, and not compel me to disown any of my former brethren; I say I often wonder whether it may not have been wise in the orderings of Providence to allow these little variations, for the accomplishment of some gracious results which could scarcely have been so conveniently secured in any other way.

And yet, after all, when I see the body of Christ, though professing common obedience to his Head, so distracted by the war in its members as to render this profession of no effect; when I see the members refusing to co-operate with each other in fulfilment of the commands of their Head. When I see hand spurning hand, and foot lagging behind foot; when I see muscle pulling against muscle; the heart working against the lungs, and the lungs against the heart; the arteries against the veins, and the veins against the arteries; and one set of nerves against another; until the whole form is thrown into frightful contortions, or is prostrated helpless on the ground in the midst of its enemies—while the godlike face turns pale with exhaustion, or grows black with obstruction; ah, me! When I witness such a scene as this—let it occur in what part of the world it may—the conviction returns, that the wrong is even more than an abstract wrong, a practical and most dangerous evil; threatening to the very existence of the church.

Again, when I see that because of divisions at home, so little is attempted abroad; when I see that the little which is attempted is itself the extension of divided and conflicting systems; and when I remember the sacrifices of men, and means, and time, for the separate interests rather than the common cause, and the consequent slow progress and slight success, in comparison with what would seem attainable under happier auspices. I confess that the impression deepens in my soul, of the presence of something more than mere abstract wrong.

Again, to come nearer home; I presume it will be generally acknowledged that the Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Methodists, are, to say the least of them, among the most useful of all Denominations in our country. Whatever diversities of creed and government exist among them, their strictly spiritual views—their views of the process of salvation—are essentially the same. But now see; even among these few Denominations, is there any proper exemplification of Christian and Ministerial Communion? How is it in our City? To speak of Christian communion, first, and this only in regard to one point, the participation of the Lord's Supper—how often do the members of these churches meet at the Table of their Common Saviour? Nay, are there not rules, or usages, in more than one of them, preventing, and designed to prevent such meetings? I do not remember that I ever even saw a Baptist communion.* Many of my hearers, I suppose, can say the same. And yet we would gladly share with them, and have them share with us. But, to speak of MINISTERIAL communion also, and this only in regard to one point, and that an unimportant one, the interchange of pulpits; how often do the Ministers of these churches preach for each other? Nay, are there not here also, at least in one instance, rules or usages adopted on purpose to prevent such exchanges. It HAS happened, within my own knowledge, that an estimable rector, who, though he could not invite his brethren to his pulpit, was at least willing to serve them in their own; and who, when he did serve them, so far conformed to the rigid notions of his own denomination, as to appear in his gown, and use the prayers in the book, and decline to acknowledge the ministerial character of those who sat with him in the pulpit, conducting the whole service himself, from the first word to the last—was reproved by his Bishop even for that. Of course, even that would not be allowed to the opposite party. For instance,—if a Methodist Minister were WILLING to go into a Protestant Episcopal Pulpit without a gown, and without a prayer book, and there, with several clergymen around him, decline to acknow-

* Then true, but not now. Have since sang and prayed, and wept, at one—but saw the elements pass unproffered.

ledge their ministerial character, assuming and exercising the entire control of the meeting himself; I say—if he were willing to do this, it would not be allowed. The most that would be allowed, so far as my observation and experience go, would be, the LOAN OF PULPIT AND HOUSE TOGETHER for the occasional use of a non-Episcopal Preacher and his congregation, in whom there should be due reason for Christian confidence, and for whose services there should be no further special responsibility. This favor is frequently shown, and, under the organic embarrassments which forbid any greater courtesy, I am inclined to regard this with increasing respect. It intimates, at least, that if the cannon cannot be displaced, there is some pleasure in proving that it is not necessary to keep it always loaded, or to fire it at every approach.

And what now? In view of the general progress of Protestantism, as we know it, and remember it—for I have scarcely touched it; May I not renew the question—"Can it be said that the Protestant Churches, great and small, have ever yet given full demonstration of love to God and man?" And if not, is not the REASON manifest? Has not SELF usurped the throne of LOVE? And, if it even be replied—then the Holy Spirit has greatly honored Self, by confering upon the churches so many spiritual gifts? and the Lord Jesus has greatly honored Self by establishing in the Churches such a variety of spiritual offices; and God the Father has greatly honored Self, by working, through these offices and gifts, so many wonders in the churches—I reply to this again that, admitting all that is said, the scene is only a counterpart to that which was witnessed by the Apostle, eighteen centuries ago, in the Church at Corinth. Nay, there was no organic and hereditary Sectarianism to separate Christians then. There were no rival Creeds, or Governments, or Ordinances, to break up Congregational and Ministerial Communion, there. The rivalry was only formal. And yet, because it introduced ENVY, and PRIDE, and VANITY, and RUDENESS, and SELFISHNESS, and RESENTMENT, and SUSPICION, and GUILE, into the House and Family of God; and because in its VERY NATURE it was false and ruinous, originating in a most egregious over-valuation of external and fugitive accidents, and a similar under-valuation of the internal and external principles of a just and holy character—so threatening the everlasting destruction of the souls for whom Jesus died; the Apostle could not hold his peace. If ever there was an apology which might have authorized silence in the absence of love, it existed then. Show me the church, in these days, with such an assemblage of Divine endowments; and, whatever its imperfections, I fear that my feebler nature will grow dumb in its presence. Show me a church with such fire-crowned Apostles—blazing with

the eloquence of men and angels. Show me a church with such lightening-eyed Prophets—flashing through all the future. Show me a church with such past-exploring teachers—explaining the mysteries of the Holy Ghost. Show me a church with such giants of Faith—lifting mountains from their foundations, and casting them into the depths of the sea. Show me a church with such lavish alms-givers—selling all that they have, and distributing to the poor. Show me a church with such heroic martyrs—giving their bodies to be burned, as freely as they would fling mere faggots into the flames. Show me such a church as this, and I, poor impulsive and erring creature, mistaking the precursors of Jehovah for His personal advent; mistaking the mind, and earthquake, and fire, for the indubitable demonstrations of His presence, will be ready to exclaim—"How dreadful is this place! Surely, God is here of a truth!" But the Apostle knew better. He remembered that "God is love." He waited, therefore, for the "still small voice" of love; and, failing to hear it, as soon as the uproar had subsided, he called to the exultant worshippers of the storm, saying:—"And yet show I unto you a more excellent way"—the way of gentle, holy, happy, heavenly love!

Let it not be thought strange, therefore, if, in imitation of his example, and more especially as the church, in all its sections, is now confessedly destitute of miraculous gifts and offices—I also proclaim "the more excellent way"—I also call for the CORONATION OF LOVE!

O, tell me! ye churches! tell me! Why is her crown so long withheld? Ye ancient Catholic Churches! Ye modern Protestant Churches! Whether great or small; whether National establishments, or Voluntary Confederations, or Local Independences; whether Episcopalian, or Presbyterian, or Congregational; tell me, one and all, why is the crown of love so long withheld? Hear ye not the command of the DYING JESUS—"A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye love one to another?" Hear ye not his additional remark—"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another?" And hear ye not also His dying prayer—"That they all may be one, as their FATHER art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me?"

Tell me, then, again I beg you, why is the crown of love so long withheld? Is it because of outward distinctions? Is it because of the evil passions exhibited by them? These cannot justify, but only aggravate the wrong. Have you better apologies? Can you honestly say—we have crowned faith? or, we have crowned hope? [redacted]hold our Infallible Creeds? Hearken to our promises of

Heaven? Alas! they will not answer. Love is greater than Faith; and Faith has no right to her crown. Love is greater than Hope; and Hope has no right to her crown. If Faith has a bundle of conflicting creeds, Love has the whole Bible and the Holy Ghost to interpret and apply it. If Hope promises to lift you at last to heaven, Love waits to bring heaven down to earth, and fill the soul, and fill the church, and fill the world, with shining saints, and singing angels, and the glorious beauty of a smiling God. The whole creation languishes for Love Divine!

O, bid your trumpeters trumpet to the nations for the Coronal of Love! Bid them turn to the North, and to the East, and to the South, and to the West, and blow a blast that all mankind shall hear! Alas! vain labor all!

Here stands a Preacher of Love! Let him remember that love begins at home! Here waits a church, free from all false authority, and professional of the universal duty of Love! Let the church remember also that Love begins at home! See, Time lingers not—Death withdraws not, for any. But yesterday another, whose name was first recorded on our books, many years ago, and within the last year or two was renewed here in hope of further communion—was called away, as I trust, to a better and enduring home. Lo! a little while longer, and we also depart. Meantime—Love—Love invites us to improve what yet remains of life, by glorifying God and doing good to man.

SERMON XXII.

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"Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—2 PETER, ch. ii., v. 13.

The course of recent opinion respecting what shall take place, as the proper close of the present economy, has given an especial importance to enquiries respecting the right meaning of the passage now under consideration. That there is to be an end of the world as it now is, has always been believed by those who receive the testimony of the inspired oracles. WHEN that end shall come, no man knoweth, nor can know. Yet, as the human mind intermeddleth with all knowledge, attainable or unattainable, solid or conjectural, so there have been some overhardy adventurers into the high and misty regions of unrestrained speculation, who have boldly deciphered for themselves the Divine calendar, and assured their astonished disciples of the day and hour, wherein the final catastrophe of the earth shall be met!

The history of opinion shows it ever to have been easier to be wise beyond what is written, than it has been, or now is, to be wise, up to what is written. For to receive with meekness the engrafted Word, requires a steady constraint upon the pride of intellect, and all the wild waywardness of an impertinent imagination; and this is the very rare and precious habit of a sanctified scholarship, that is eager to be taught from on high, what be the first and the last principles of the Book of Truth. Such scholarship judges it simply dutiful to receive its opinions from the Bible; and what it cannot know NOW of the nature, scheme, and scope of Redemption, it will patiently and hopefully wait, to know HEREAFTER. But while it rejects merely speculative notions as dangerous, it cleaves, nevertheless, with full purpose of heart, to every jot and [illegible]le of the whole Bible. Overlooking none of parts, and under[illegible]ing none of its disclosures, it studies to discover the time and

proper meaning of all that was written aforetime for our learning and profit.

We should not shrink, therefore, from the investigation of difficult themes, simply because they are difficult, but rather task ourselves all the more, to comprehend aright the "hard things" which the unlearned and unstable are constantly wresting to their own destruction. And everywhere in the Holy Scriptures we encounter HARD because HIGH things. The mere words, whereby they are communicated to us, are indeed easy to be understood—but the "things" themselves—the ideas, or thoughts, or principles—being parts of a Divine System, are not to be measured and weighed by any self-confident use of the scales and rules, which partial and therefore inadequate reason can supply.

As God only is capable of revealing and interpreting Himself, so also we are ever to remember that there is but one book, that can explain the Bible, and that book is the Bible itself. They see light, more and brighter, beaming on and from its pages who take heed to it, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in their hearts. Knowing this first, that no prophecy—no spoken—or recorded word of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. As the Holy Ghost inspired what holy men wrote, so the meaning of the Spirit is to be found by a careful comparison with each other of the several parts of that sublime system of Revelation which shines and moves around us.

In treating the text, we shall try

I. To ascertain the sense in which Peter uses the words, comprising it.

II. Show the correspondence, between that sense and other parts of the Sacred Scriptures relating to the same subjects.

III. Add some confirmatory illustrations, drawn from the Divine administration of the affairs of the world.

Not wishing to give any controversial cast to this discourse, I shall not for the present, at least, make any formal statement of the three principal interpretations of this passage, which have been urged by some and adopted by others. We need not embarrass our investigation by assuming a polemical attitude. What we seek is Truth—and that is not of men, but of God. We begin, therefore, at the beginning, and inquire—first, What is the sense in which the sacred writer himself employed the words of the text?

He refers to a promise—that promise is recorded in Isaiah LXV: 17. "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth, —and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."

So, also, in Isaiah LXVI: 22, it is written, "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I shall make, shall remain

before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain."

The word heaven or heavens is used to signify the abode of the blessed, or the visible firmament studded with stars, or the atmosphere which surrounds the earth. And, in their conjunction, the words heaven and earth, when occurring in the sacred writings, are commonly meant to describe the earth as dependent upon and related to the general system of which it forms a part. Or, in other words, they denote simply that present physical economy to which this, our present earth, is now subject, and do not necessarily include that universe of suns and systems which is made up of the grand aggregate of the heavenly hosts.

When, therefore, the Apostle writes, "Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," he means to declare the certainty of the destruction of the earth, so far as its present form and condition is concerned, and its reconstruction into a new earth, surrounded with a sky and an atmosphere adapted to its renovated state. It is to pass through a purgation of fire, and be changed into a beauty it does not now possess, and be wrapped by heavens more serene and wholesome than these now swept by tempests, and filled with the subtile forces of disease and death. The change is to be literal, actual, real, and not figurative, nor spiritual.

That this is what the Apostle intends to have understood is most evident from the context. He is replying to objectors who argued against the probability of the return of Christ, from the assumed permanency of the material word, saying, "where is the promise of His coming, for since the Fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation?" To which the Apostle answers that these scoffers are willingly ignorant of the fact, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth "standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

"But the heavens and the earth which are now by the same word, are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men,"

And then, after having warned his readers against indulging in a conceit that this day of judgment and day of destruction was immediately at hand, he adds, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat—the earth also and the works that are contained therein shall be burned up.'

It is impossible to regard such language as purely figurative or

symbolic in form of expression. It fortells the coming of a great and sublime change through which the earth that now is shall pass and beyond which there shall be a new earth and new heavens, wherein dwelleth righteousness. It is an argument from the reality of changes that have occurred in the material structure of the globe, to a still greater and completer change yet in reserve—a final change, in fact, connected with and necessary to the accomplishment of the whole work of Redemption.

II. We now proceed to note the agreement of this declaration of the text with other parts of sacred Scriptures. In so doing we should understand in advance, that some of the Divine reasons for the creation of the new heavens and new earth will appear in the quotations about to be made; for the reconstruction of the globe we now inhabit is a part of the plan of Grace, and is represented as essential to its full and glorious consummation.

Nature furnishes the material sphere, in which the spiritual forces of Redemption may work out their grand results. We are not to suppose that there is a physical government of the world completely separate from its moral government. For as the human body was formed for the uses of the soul, so was the world itself made to be the theatre in which shall be completely manifested the wonderful history, power and glory of the Redemptive system. This is expressly affirmed in Ephesians ch. iii. ver. 9, 10, and 11, in which Jesus Christ is represented as the key to the mystery of Creation "which (mystery) from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ to the intent, that unto principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In the clear light of this declaration, it can be easily seen, that our existing framework of materialism was from the beginning ordained to be, subject to the uses and control of the sublime spiritual purpose which led to the creation of man, his fall, and all the series of steps taken for his restoration and exaltation into the Divine Dignity, of which he was originally made capable.

But while the Earth was fashioned to be the great battle-field for death and life, with all their allied forces, it was not intended to be, and indeed could not be as it now is, the home of the beatified.

The whole apparatus of nature, so far as the earth is concerned, is adjusted to the present state and condition of sinners. While it everywhere, indeed, shows marks of benevolence, it is nevertheless benevolence incomplete, and falling short of its capabilities. Material nature now is rather a promise than a performance. August as it is in power, and beautiful in its diversified arrangements,

nevertheless the forces of earth and air and sea, are in perpetual antagonism to man's repose and happiness. He maintains his place among them only by hard and watchful efforts to assert his proper dominion over them. He wearies in the warfare, sickens in the contact, and dies sooner or later in the encounter. Is materialism then His tyrant, master and conqueror? Is the common dust greater than the throbbing soul?

Questions these we may ask in anguish and find for them no comforting solution, unless we turn to the Holy Word and learn therefrom, that the present state of our earth is transitional and preliminary to another and a higher. The old earth is ever rolling toward the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

This expectation is assured by that wonderful passage in the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans (verses 19, 20, 21, 22), "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of Him (Jesus Christ), who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation—governeth and travaileth in pain together until now"—waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body? Here the temporary subjection of the entire physical system of the earth, and of earthly things into a state of vanity, emptiness, decay, and dissolution, is asserted to be in sympathy with man's fallen and groaning and waiting condition, and that this subjection to vanity will continue until the hour of the Resurrection, when they who have been renovated in soul and body will require and receive a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

In accord with this view of our subject is the argument contained in 2d ch. of the Epistle to the Hebrews, wherein the Apostle speaks of "The world to come," and then proceeds to show that in the present world, that is the present economy, (for such is the original Greek) all things are not yet in actual subjection to Christ, although he had suffered and been crowned, still we "see not yet all things put under Him; and then in the next and following chapters goes on to show that there remains a rest period, or a condition of final happiness for the saints which has not yet been reached—it remaineth in reserve—it is still a heritage—"a world to come." Clearly in all this exposition the Apostle points to a more definite and territorial inheritance, than is commonly included in the vague popular theology of our day, which places the rest of the people of God finally and forever in some unknown spiritual abode, denominated Heaven.

So also in the 6th chapter he speaks of those "who have tasted

the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come"—that is, who have felt the yearning after and a partial subjection of soul to the principles and spirit of "the world to come."

Now in what sense the Apostle uses the phrase "world to come," is not very hard to find out. It is the messianic kingdom, complete and victorious over all enemies. It is the place and state into which the people of God shall enter through the gates of the Resurrection. It is the new Heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

All doubt respecting this interpretation, would seem to be removed by the stress which Paul constantly places upon the fact, that the work of Christ in the salvation of believers will not have been completed until the redemption of their bodies from the grave has been effected, as well as their souls from the guilt and dominion of sin.

The Resurrection is the end and object of his hopes and desires. He counts everything tributary to his securement of a part in the Resurrection of the just, and with the Resurrection, we need not say that he connects the final judgment, the destruction of the earth, and the glorious establishment of "the world to come." Having described the Resurrection in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, he exclaims, "We shall not all sleep," the mighty change shall pass over creation, before all die; "but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

Now in connection with this consummate event, there will occur another of fearful grandeur, described in the 1st chapter of the 2d Epistle to the Thessalonians, "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." And to cover all authority, and to put an end to all argument, we have the declaration of the Lord Jesus himself —"That the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt., ch. 24.

From these quotations, we see not how it is possible to avoid the conclusion, that the general judgment and the resurrection of

the dead, and the flaming fire of the world, burning up to make place for a new earth, will occur in immediate succession. The awful and sublime drama of time, will then reach its final close. Death conquered, Jesus exalted, the Church saved, and a new heavens and a new earth secured to all who have been redeemed by the atoning blood of Calvary.

It is among these majestic scenes that the visions of the Apocalypse reach their end.

"And I saw a new Heaven and a new Earth; for the first Heaven and the first Earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.'" Then follows a symbolic description of the Holy City, and it is added, "And there shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but THEY which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

As a climax to this series of inspired declarations respecting the close of the present and the beginning of the new and glorious economy, we think the following passage may be well introduced to throw light upon the certainty of the things already affirmed. It occurs in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. The subject is the resurrection, and the time when it will take place, and the immediate consequence to ensue.

Every man in his own order. Christ the first fruits. Afterwards they who were Christ's—at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God. Even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death. . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him, that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

When that point in the unfoldings of God's scheme of mercy shall have been reached, then all these grand events described in the several preceding quotations, will have taken place—the dead raised—the wicked judged—and the signal majesty of Christ displayed; the meditational work will have been all accomplished, and the old earth having groaned through its ages of accumulating misery and crime, will dissolve and give place to another, which may be the happy abode of these whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

III. It remains now to add a few confirmatory illustrations, drawn from the Divine administration of the affairs of the world.

Providence is a Divine Commentary upon the Book of Revelation. And in so far as we are able to discern the real meaning of the commentary, are we moved to trust and reverence the sacred texts.

In the most general way it may be affirmed as certain, that God's plans, as they come within the scope of our vision, are all progressive. Nothing that we can see is finished. Everything is in process of growth and development, and waits for fulness. All is yet on earth spring-time or summer—the autumnal harvest is neither ripened, nor gathered. And this is true both of the earth itself and of its inhabitants.

There is hardly a single reason to doubt the former existence of a pre-adamite earth, or world inferior to this, and fit only for the habitation of organized beings, far beneath man in structure and in purpose.

The history in the rocks proves the crust of the present earth to be composed in part of the wrecks and ruins of an earth that far ante-dated the appearance of man upon the threshold of time. Of that history we need say nothing here more than this, that it proves an order of progression in the material arrangements of our globe.

Since the creation of Adam, there have been vast and innumerable physical changes in the condition of the earth, and in its relation to the heavenly bodies. The scoffers in the time of Peter, like the scoffers of our day, deified law, and believed in an impersonal God. They argued from the uniformity of the operations of the laws of nature, that matter must be eternal and the world perpetual. The Apostle replied that there had been great physical changes, and there was yet to be another and a greater; and he argued, moreover, that all these physical changes were part of the methods by which the Almighty Sovereign was unfolding the principles of His moral administration, and vindicating His Justice and Holiness. And, in like manner, we argue now, that as God hath worked hitherto, so he works also now. We study our dry sciences, and speculate about countless themes; but Revelation tells us that He who made the world, rules it still. The earthquake shock, and volcanic flame, and watery deluge, and lightning bolt, and all the innumerable agencies of nature, whether fierce or gentle, fulfil His word, and carry forward His grand designs, toward the period when the Archangel's trump shall sound and the dead awake, and the dust yield its long-treasured spoils, and the sea give up its garnered trophies—and the tribes and kindreds of the earth shall hear with dismay that " time shall be no longer."

There is not hardihood enough in any of the sciences to enter a protest against either the possibility or probability of this climax in human affairs.

Astronomy tells us that there have been worlds which have changed their places, or have ceased to shine. Chemistry declares that a slight modification in the composition of our atmosphere would plunge the world into an instantaneous conflagration; and geology, watching every footprint in the sands of time, proclaims it to be likely that again the mountains will grieve with resounding moans, and the valleys be tossed about once more in the wild commotion of disturbed powers, and that the sea will forsake its bed, and rush in terror before the fury of a fiery tempest, that shall submerge the world in ruin.

I say science cannot protest, on the contrary it intimates these things; but it has been reserved for Revelation to make the disclosure sure in language to shake the soul. "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless, we according to His promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

To this conclusion all the dispensations have been converging. We live in the last dispensation of grace. How long it may continue we cannot tell. But we know that amid wars and tumults, turnings and overturnings, He is coming whose right it is to rule. And when his final rule shall be established, there will be an earth resplendent with beauty, and a sky illumined by the light of the Divine countenance.

I have aimed, in this discourse, simply to collate and arrange passages of Scripture, so that they may illumine and interpret each other, and thereby show that there are three grand events which the Holy Word connects together—namely, the general resurrection, the general judgment, and the final destruction of the earth by fire—and that all these are essential to the completion of the plan of salvation.

It is needless to say that the views presented differ essentially from the ones insisted on by those writers who regard the text as requiring a purely figurative and spiritual interpretation,—and so, too, they differ also very widely from the opinions put forth by the Second Adventists, who hold that Christ will return to earth at the beginning of the Millenium, raise a portion of his people, restore the Jews, and create a new monarchy which shall exercise judgment over all the nations of the earth, and finally rehabilitate Jerusalem, and make it the city of the great King forever. We have nothing

to do with these theories. The sublime facts of Revelation are enough for us.

The grand combination of argument and appeal in favour of holy living, and of solemn waiting for the august tribunal of Christ which the whole tenor of the Bible supplies, needs no strengthening from our inventions and special theories.

Before us is the certainty of Death—and of Judgment—and it is our duty to work while the day lasts, knowing that we shall surely give account of all the deeds done here, and that we shall share either in the final glory, or in the bitter and endless shame.

We are living—we are dwelling
In a grand eventful time,
In an age—on ages telling—
To be living is sublime.

Hark! the waking up of nations,
Truth and error to the fray;
Hark! what soundeth? 'tis creation
Groaning for its latter day.

Will ye play, then? will ye dally
With your music and your wine?
Up! it is Jehovah's rally!
God's own arm hath need of thine.

Hark! the onset! will ye fold your
Faith-clad arms in lazy lock?
Up! oh up! thou drowsy soldier;
Worlds are charging to the shock.

Worlds are charging, Heaven beholding,
Thou hast but an hour to fight,
AND the blazoned cross unfolding,
ON! right ONWARD—for the night.

A. C. COX.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

For the Prayer-Meeting.

He art Watching.

THE heart is the citidal of the soul. In all ages and countries it has been found necessary to watch against the approach of enemies. Night and day the watchful sentinel walks on the walls to give the alarm when an enemy comes in sight. Nor less important is it to watch against the inroads of enemies to the soul.

Perhaps no Christian duty is more neglected than heart watch-

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neglected house of prayer. The Spirit of Christ opened their eyes, and they were led to see their need of mercy, and sought and found a God ready to forgive. With thankfulness and love, in conjunction with the friend before alluded to, these new converts sought to bring other careless ones to the sanctuary; and the Lord has been pleased graciously to own and bless these efforts, and two other couples have united themselves with the people of God.

That was a blessed Sabbath when this Christian friend, with these six souls, sat at the table of the Lord to commemorate His dying love. O, who can tell the far-reaching results of this simple Christian effort? This friend did no more than every disciple can do. Who cannot say to his brother, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel?"

"Would you win a soul to God?
Tell him of the Saviour's blood,
Once for dying sinners spilt,
To atone for all their guilt."

These converts are heads of families, all of them having little children to train up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." There are now three more family altars in the world. The world is richer, brighter, and purer for these; and when we can estimate the usefulness of a Doddridge, we may learn how to value pious parental example and instruction.

Dear reader! fellow Christian! follower of Jesus! where is thy brother? Are you earnestly, and prayerfully and wisely seeking to win his soul? or are you sleeping over His immortal interests?

The Joy of Angels.

THE joy of angels is over the repentance and salvation of sinners. Such a view have they of the misery, guilt and doom of transgression, and of the amazing worth and preciousness of eternal redemption by Jesus Christ, that the repentance of but one sinner renders all heaven joyful, and is celebrated by angels as an event of infinite interest and value. Said the Lord of angels: "I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." The recovery of a lost soul to God; the salvation of a sinner from the law-incurred penalty from sin itself, and from the doom of an endless hell; his salvation by means of that Cross which so honours God and sustains His law while it redeems and reconciles, is a stupendous achievement. Where, in the universe, can anything be found to equal it, in interest, importance, blessedness, true sublimity? The most thrilling events of a merely temporal, social or political character; the creation or destruction of material worlds and systems; the rise and fall of kingdoms; the setting up of new, and the casting

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will see this power of sin to
thorn which cannot be
dicated, wherever it gains ad-
ssion, acting universally. The
wound may remain insensible for
time, but it cannot be cured.
The sinner may forget his sin,
but he cannot cut off his respon-
sibility for it, or escape from the
danger of having the corroding
sufferings of it, break out upon
him at any time. They do some-
times break out in this world.
After the lapse of many years,
the bitter recollections of early
guilt, will come over the soul,
overwhelm it with suffering.
assures us too, that in
other world they will come
with all their power.
The nature of sin, then, is such
he who commits it, plants a
in his side, which at first
but it will bring
last. It is as if a boy,
had lost its sensibility
beautiful disease, should
his flesh wantonly in
inflicting wounds
will drive
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It
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which can cure them. And sensibility is to return. In fact, it is not wholly gone now, but at a future day, it will fully return.

"I Can do Nothing."

A BOY arose not long since in the Fulton Street prayer-meeting, and with great propriety desired for himself the prayers of Christians. He said:

"When I was converted, I was resolved on doing a great many things. I have no father, having lost a dear praying father some time since. I have a mother who is not pious. I have impenitent sisters. So I resolved on doing much for my mother and sister in the way of securing their salvation. I resolved to establish family prayer. I had the consent of all to this. I thought I had done something when I got leave to lead the family in morning and evening prayer. I went about the matter with great resolution; but I have not succeeded as well as I expected. I have other plans of doing. In all of my expectations I have been greatly disappointed. I see I went forward in my own strength and, expected to accomplish wonders in bringing my mother and sisters to Jesus. I am not able to see any progress. Indeed, everything seems to be going backward. All these hearts are less interested now than they were, and those I love seem farther from Christ than before. What am I to do next? I have found out that I can do nothing. I meant to brave it out, for I saw there was secret opposition; and I find the more I do, the less is done. I find I am nothing and can do nothing."

The poor boy sat down.

An older Christian very appropriately said:—"Now my little young brother will be able to do something, since he has found out that all his strength and success must come from God. Depend on God, and then what is done in the name of Jesus, and for the sake of Jesus, will not be in vain. It will be something done."

Jesus Saves the Lost.

"How am I to be saved, mother?" said a little boy.

"By taking God at His word, and believing what He said concerning His Son."

"But have I nothing to DO?" said the boy. "I thought I must do something; for I was once told that I must be good, or else God would have nothing to do with me."

"My child, Jesus has done what was needed; and you are saved by knowing that all is done."

"But I am not good," said the boy; "will God have nothing to do with me unless I am good?"

"My boy, Jesus Christ came into the world to save SINNERS; He receives the BAD, not the GOOD; else none would be saved. It is your badness, not your goodness, that you are to bring to Him."

"Well, that is good news," said the little fellow. "Oh, how cruel to tell me that God would have nothing to do with me unless I was good."

"Yes, it was. You can't be good till you have come and given your badness to Jesus."

The Light in the Well.

A LITTLE girl had in her hands a string of gold beads belonging to her mother. Neglecting her mother's caution not to take them out of the house, she, while attempting to draw a bucket of water, dropped them into the well.

The well was a very deep one. You could just see the glimmering of the water.

When her father came in from the field, he took a light, and went down into the well. The water was shallow. He easily discovered the beads. He saw in the well quite a number of articles which had fallen in from time to time, and had been forgotten.

There are a great many things in our hearts, and things, alas! which we do not see till light is let into the heart by the Holy Spirit.

We need to know what is in our hearts, in order that they may be taken out. Hence we should pray for the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit.

"What could he do in Heaven?"

IT was many years ago, when stage coaches still ran, that an excellent old clergyman, who had a keen observation of the world, was travelling on top of the coach. It was cold, wintry weather, and the coachman, as he drove his horses rapidly, poured forth such a volley of oaths and foul language as to shock all the passengers. The old clergyman, who was sitting close to him, said nothing, but fixed his piercing blue eyes upon him with a look of extreme wonder and astonishment. At last the coachman became uneasy, and turning round to him, said, "What makes you look at me, sir, in that way?"

The clergyman said, with his eyes fixed upon him, "I cannot imagine what you will do in heaven! There are no horses, or coaches, or saddles, or bridles, or public houses in heaven. There will be none to swear at, or to whom you can use bad language. I cannot think what you will do when you get to heaven!"

God before Man.

MANY Christians have no regular time for closet devotions. They have regular hours for meals, for business, or even for exercise and recreation, but they set apart no particular time to be alone with God. They say in act, if not in word, that He must wait

upon their pleasure, and they will give to an interview with Him such moments as may not be otherwise occupied. Such Christians rarely grow in grace, or make themselves felt in the church, or in the world, by eminence in godliness.

Dr. Ashbel Green, pastor of one of the Presbyterian churches in Philadelphia, and previously President of Princeton College, was a Christian of another type. He was a man of method, and adhered almost inflexibly to habits he had formed after mature reflection. His hours of private devotion were sacred, and he would not set them aside for any claims of business or friendship. Dr. Murray gives a very striking incident in connection with this habit. He was visiting Philadelphia, and Dr. Green sent for him to consult about some matters connected with the New Jersey Historical Society. Dr. Murray called early in the morning, about nine o'clock, and Dr. Green gave him a cordial greeting; but as soon as the business matter was arranged, he frankly said: "My devotional reading is not yet concluded; I shall be happy to see you at another time;" and added in parting, "may God bless you."

The circumstance left a deep impression on Dr. Murray's mind, for he had been accustomed to hold familiar intercourse with this venerable father in the ministry, and this was the last time he saw him on earth. He felt that Dr. Green lived in intimate communion with God, and however much he loved his brethren in the ministry, he would not forego a regular meeting with his heavenly Friend for an earthly companion or fellow-laborer. It would be well for the steadfast piety of Christians, if such habits were more general in the churches.—*Watchman and Reflector.*

Dead, Yet Living.

THE cedar is most useful when dead. It is the most productive when its place knows it no more. There is no timber like it. Firm in the grain and capable of the finest polish, the tooth of no insect will touch it, and time itself can hardly destroy it. Diffusing a perpetual fragrance through the chambers which it ceils, the worm will not corrode the book which it protects, nor the moth corrupt the garment which it guards,—all but immortal itself, it transfuses its amaranthine qualities to the objects around it. Every Christian is useful in his life, but the goodly cedars are the most useful afterward. Luther is dead, but the Reformation lives. Calvin is dead, but his vindication of God's free and sovereign grace will never die. Knox, Melville, and Henderson are dead, but Scotland still retains a Sabbath and a Christian peasantry, a Bible in every house, and a school in every parish. Bunyan is dead, but his bright

spirit still wakes the earth in its "Pilgrim's Progress." Baxter is dead, but souls are still quickened by the "Saint's Rest." Cowper is dead, but the "golden apples" are still as fresh as when newly gathered in the "silver basket" of the Olney Hymns. Eliot is dead, but the missionary enterprize is young. Henry Martyn is dead, but who can count the apostolic spirits who, phenix-like, have started from his funeral pile? Howard is dead, but modern philanthropy is only commencing its career. Raikes is dead, but the Sabbath-schools go on.—*Rev. James Hamilton.*

The Depth of Space.

In 1837, Professor Bessel, of Germany, commenced a series of astronomical measures for getting the exact distance to the fixed stars—a thing that had never been done. The instrument which he used, in connection with a powerful telescope, in his experiments, was called an Heliometer (sun-measurer). After three years' hard labour, he was so fortunate as to obtain a parallax, but so very minute that he could hardly trust his reputation upon it. But after repeated trials, and working out the results he was fully satisfied that he could give the true distance to 61 sygin. But who can comprehend this immense distance? We can only convey an idea to the mind of this distance by the fact that light, which travels twelve millions of miles in a minute, requires not less than ten years to reach us! Just let any one try to take in the idea. One hour would give 720,000,000 of miles; in one year, then—8,760 hours—this gives 6,307,200,000,000, and this multiplied by ten gives 63,072,000,000,000. This, accooding to Professor Bessel, is the nearest fixed star to the sun. And all astronomers confirm the correctness of Professor Bessel's calculations. But this distance, great as it is, is nothing to be compared to the distance of the Milky Way. Sir Wm. Herschel says that the stars or suns that compose the Milky Way are so remote, that it requires light going at the rate of 12,000,000 of miles in a minute, 120,000 years to reach the earth. And he says there are stars, or rather nebula, five hundred times more remote! Now make your calculation: 120,000,000 years reduced to minutes, and then multiply that sum by 12,000,000, and the product by 500. What an overwhelming idea! The mind sinks under such an overwhelming thought; we can't realize it; it is too vast even for human comprehension. David says, Psalm ciii. 19: "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all."

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SERMON XXIII.

Preached before the New York and Brooklyn Foreign Missionary Society, auxiliary to the American Board of Foreign Missions, in the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, (Rev. Dr. Cuyler's.) on Sunday evening, November 22d and in the Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church, (Dr. Crosby's,) Sunday evening November 29th, 1863.

BY THE REV. ROSWELL D. HITCHCOCK, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

THE FINAL TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY.

"AND I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."—ST. JOHN 12 : 32

Our Lord was crucified on Friday, April the seventh, in the year 30. On Wednesday, the fifth of April, he stood for the last time within the venerable precincts of the Jewish Temple, and in the hearing both of Jews and Gentiles, pronounced his last public discourse ; a discourse which John alone of the evangelists has reported, and of which our text may be looked upon as the grand culminating utterance.

The lifting up here spoken of, has doubtless a double reference : First, to death by crucifixion ; and secondly, to the glorious exaltation which was to follow. Greek proselytes,

representing the Gentile world, had asked to see Jesus, that they might learn about the kingdom which he had come to establish. In two days more, the Founder of this new kingdom would be hanging dead upon the cross. The faith of these inquiring Greeks was liable to be rudely shaken by an issue seemingly so disastrous. To enable them to withstand this shock, our Lord not only accepts, but emphasizes the impending agony. His path, he assures them, will be no defeat, no disturbance even of his plans. Lifted up to the cross, he will thence be lifted to the right hand of the Father, and from that heavenly height, will carry on triumphantly his redeeming work. Nor need it be thought strange that death should thus be made the gateway to life, to glory, and to dominion. Such is the universal law. The corn of wheat must be buried in the ground to rot and perish, or it bears no fruit. Man himself must die unto self and sin, in order to live unto God eternally. Much more, then, must man's Redeemer die, in order to the assumption of his regal power. It is as though our Lord had said: Be not troubled when you see me lifted up to the cross; for in this is the beginning of a kingdom, which shall spread from heart to heart, from race to race, and from century to century, till it completes at length the conquest of the globe.

And so the meaning of our text is plain. It does not teach the doctrine of universal salvation. It does not say that every single member of the human family will certainly be saved. The drawing to himself, which Christ promises, is not a compulsory, but a moral drawing, which may therefore, of course, be resisted, and rendered of no avail. As a matter of fact, palpable to every honest odserver, multitudes of men, stoutly withstanding this divine attraction, have perished and are now perishing in their sins. But the Gospel shall prove no failure. Suited as it is to the necessities of all men, and sincerely offered to all, it shall save all who embrace it. Nor shall the number of those embracing it be small. That cross of agony and shame reared on Golgotha, shall never be overturned. Men of every race, and clime, and dye of guiltiness, shall be drawn towards it, and subdued by it. Every thing else on earth shall totter and fall away; laws, customs, institutions, religions. But this shall stand unshaken amidst the nations. Jews and Gentiles, wise and foolish, high and low, bond and free, shall gather round it. High looming amidst the civilizations and the centuries, it shall stand and draw; working slowly, it may be, but working ever surely till its work is done, and great voices are heard shouting back and forth athwart the heavens, that the kingdoms of this world

are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Christianity thus stands committed to the achievement of universal dominion. Its founder puts it forward into history as the universal religion, fore-ordained to universal prevalence. For those of us who worship Christ as Good, this prophetic assurance of final victory is enough. Our lines might be much thinner than they are, our march much slower, our trophies fewer, and still we should not be disheartened. We should still stand fast by the ancient bond, which gives Christ the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Generation after generation might succeed to the arduous succeed struggle, and still the Church would keep her camp-fires burning, never doubting that the time will come, however distant, when her camp-fires shall be killed, and her banners shake, on every hill-top from the rising to the settingsun.

But if this be true of the Church in her instinctive loyalty to Christ, it is equally true that the asserted Divinity of Christ is itself on trial. If the religion which he established falls short of universal acceptance, if it encounters civilizations superior to it, if it comes into contact with races of men which it cannot conquer, then the pretensions of its Founder are brought to shame. Scattered and partial triumphs will not suffice. Either Christianity must subdue all things to itself, or be routed entirely from the field. If it do not everywhere ultimately prevail, then it is not what it claims to be, and ought not anywhere prevail.

Setting aside therefore, for the present, the promise of its Founder, which is decisive only on the assumption of his divinity, it becomes necessary for us to entertain, an independent ground, the question, whether Christianity is likely thus to prevail. We shall have to ask ourselves whether there be anything inherent in the system itself, or anything in its past history, prophetic of universal dominion. This we know has been again and again denied. In the second century it was denied by Celsus, who took the ground that different races and nations are preconfigured to different religions, and that consequently the expectation of universal diffusion for any single religion, is a foolish dream. Christianity is thus confuted at the start by the glaring absurdity of its aim. Its insane ambition of universal conquest brands it as an imbecility and a cheat. A skepticism similar to this of Celsus in regard to the ultimate universal prevalence of Christianity, exists in our day. There are those amongst us, affecting philosophy,

who have no faith in our evangelism. They may indeed admit, what no candor can deny, that the religion of the cross has become the religion of the best and ruling races of mankind; but they do not believe that it can be made to traverse the whole scale of humanity. There are races of men, it is alleged, who can no more take it than they could take the refined philosophy of Plato. These races may be overborne and pushed out of history; but evangelized they can never be. Or if ever evangelized, it can not be till they have first been civilized. Nor is the faith of Christian men themselves always as firm and buoyant as it should be. The good work goes on slowly. Empires like those of China and Japan, embracing more than a third part of the population of the globe, and millions of men everywhere, idolatrous and stupid, resist our march. On rational and historic grounds, apart from the explicit assurance of prophecy, have we any right to expect that these empires, and these millions will ever accept the faith we offer them?

This question I now propose to answer: First, by an analysis of Christianity itself, which by making clear its marvelous adaptation to human wants, such as no human system ever exhibited, may at the same time demonstrate the divinity of its origin, and so give double assurance of its final triumph; and secondly, by a brief glance at the past achievements of Christianity in its gallant struggle for the dominion of the world.

I. In the first place, what are the distinctive features of Christianity? Wherein does it differ from other religions? And how do these points of difference stand related to God on the one side, and to man on the other?

1. In enumerating the distinctive features of our religion, we may mention first the Incarnation of God in Christ.

If any thing is clear from history, it is clear that human nature can not endure a bald spiritual theism. Man has two thoughts of God, equally normal and necessary. He thinks of God as One Infinite Spirit, wholly separate from matter, without form, or voice, or changeable affections, transcending the limitations of time and space, wise, just, and awful in his holiness. Hence the pure monotheism now recognized as lying in the background of all the better Pagan mythologies. Hence, in part, the triumphs of Mohammed, whose wild voice out of the Arabian peninsula went pealing over three continents: "Your God is one God." That there are more gods than one, or that this One God is any thing else than pure spirit, human reason in its best estate, has always steadily

refused to believe. The divine unity and spirituality were affirmed by Plato, looking the Greek polytheism boldly in the face; and were re-affirmed by the Neo-Platenists as essential parts of their eclectric creed. But human weakness and human sinfulness necessitate another conception of God. Across the great gulf between the finite and the infinite, between sin and holiness, the voice of man is afraid to speak. The human heart sinks discouraged, and shudders with affright. A being so feeble, and so defiled, must have God near to him. Hence the Patriarchal and Hebrew theophanies, in which the ineffable Jehovah is seen wearing the human form, and is heard speaking in human tones. Hence, likewise, the Pagan deification of nature and man, and all the inferior divinities of the Pagan Pantheon, bridging as best they might, the bottomless abyss which yawns betwixt the finite and the infinite, the sinful and the sinless. The idea of incarnation is thus seen to be congenial to our nature. And yet in none of the instances referred to was this idea realized. The Patriarchal and Hebrew theophanies were only transient manifestations of God in the human form; a temporary expedient of merely provisional economies. They only abated a hunger which they could not feed. Still they served what appears to have been their providential purpose; they prevented at once the worship of nature and the multiplication of inferior divinities. Accordingly for centuries, down even to the time of the deluge, when wicked men shrank away from the awfulness of God, they took refuge not in polytheism, but in atheism. After the Deluge, mankind no longer able to be atheists, betook themselves to the worship of innumerable divinities. Nature in all her rage was defied from the starry hosts on high down to the mountains, the rivers, and the trees. At first these natural objects were revered only as symbols of the Divine presence and power. At first the carved or molten image was only a symbol. But in process of time the symbols themselves were worshiped. Even the Hebrews, in spite of their theophanies were till after the exile in Babylon, constantly lapsing into these idolatries. Outside of Judaism the declension was monstrous. The Creator was sunk and lost sight of in his creation. In the great hunger of the human heart for an incarnate God, polytheism became the faith of the masses, and pantheism the speculation of the schools. Human reason pronounces for unity in its conception of the Godhead; but the human heart, yearning for sympathy in its weakness, and stricken with terror in its defilement cries out for an incarnate God.

This importunate demand of our finite and sinful nature is for the first time met, and fully met, by the incarnation of God in Christ. The theophanies were transient and provisional. They really adumbrated the coming reality. The incarnations of the pagan world were all of a pantheistic type, involving no proper personal union between the Divine and the human. In the pagan philosophies, God could enter humanity no other wise than he entered nature. The tree and the man fared alike. But in Christ the two natures, each complete and perfect in itself, were united in a real, perfect personality. He was a man, born of the Virgin Mary, with a real human body, and a real human soul; as human in every propor sense of the word, as any one of us. He was also God; not God the Father, but God the Word, the Second Person in the Trinity, whom angels worship and who made the worlds. In one breath we may say of him that he was born and died. In the next breath we may say of him, Before Abraham began to be he eternally and unchangeably is. And for three and thirty years this mysterious being lived and walked in Palestine. Now he sailed upon the lake, and now he smoothed its angry billows by a word. Now he was a genial guest at a marriage feast, and now he turned the water into wine. Now he wept before a sepulcher, and now he waked the dead. Now he died himself, and now having risen from the dead, he ascended up where he was before. Such is the Christ of the New Testament. Such was the Christ of Christendom for three hundred years before the Nicene Creed echoed the speculations of Athanasius. And such has been the Christ of Christendom, by a vast preponderance of numbers in every succeeding century. Such, too, must continue to be the Christ of Christendom, by an equally vast preponderance of numbers, through all coming time. Here at last our nature rests. Here at last is the great hunger of the heart appeased. We need no less, as we can ask no more. God manifest in the flesh is the end of all our desires, the solace of all our sorrows, the conquest of all our fears. And what is more, even philosophy is now ranging herself on the side of faith. From pantheistic speculations there is no legitimate escape but in the doctrine of the Word made flesh. Here then, the sage and the savage meet, bowing together at the feet of an incarnate God. The conception of such a divine humanity is equally above them both; but as an accomplished fact, it satisfies and renovates, and saves them both.

2. Another distinctive feature of Christianity is the Atonement.

If as a Roman poet has said, it be human to err, equally human

is it to undergo the pangs of remorse and the fear of punishment. Dualism may, in indeed, may affirm an eternal independent principle of evil, and pantheism may seek to resolve all evil into good; but the conscience of the race refuses thus to be relieved of its crushing burden of guilt. In man's own unperverted and honest judgment of himself, he is an offender, not merely against the moral order of the universe, but an offender against the moral ruler of the universe, against whom personally he has rebelled, and whose inmost moral nature has been aroused to the vindication of its righteous claims. Punishment is of course the instinctive apprehension of the soul that has sinned. Nature, it is observed, always punishes, never pardons an offender. Human governments seldom pardon. Human society would lose its coherence, and human life itself become a hideous riot, were not punishment the rule for evil-doers, and pardon the rare exception. How, then, can impunity for sinners be looked for under the moral government of God? But the abyss thus opened is frightful; for every human being misery, and that misery eternal. Hence a wild cry everywhere for relief. Is there no escape? Is the law to have its course? In this sphere of spirit, as in the sphere of sense, must fire always burn, and water always drown? Verily they must, says reason; there is no such thing as forgiveness. Altars and sacrifices are of no avail. From the very heights of the Platonic philosophy, more than two thousand years ago, the verdict came that "the gods are not easily propitiated." Sorrow, O sinner! is bootless; by penance you must yourself atone for the mischief you have wrought. I will not say that human beings in their distress would never dare to dream that God might somehow succor such misery. But I must say, what no sound thinker will venture to question, that there is no safety in reasoning from mere goodness to mercy. The rude peasant, with low, confused notions of what is due to justice and law, might have imagined that somehow pardon was attainable; but philosophy would have rebuked his presumption. And yet in spite of philosophy, men everywhere have had their altars and victims. Whence these altars and victims? Of blind human instinct say some, making thus the strongest possible confession of ill-desert, in the hope of averting a retribution seen to be justly impending. Of gross conceptions, say others, as though God might be wrought upon and moved to favor by such offerings. But penitent confession, how bitter soever it may be, is no atonement says philosophy. Nor is God so coarse and savage a monster as to delight in the scent of burning flesh. Let

then these altars and victims be swept away; they are an offense to reason. And yet the altars stand, dotting every continent, and with their huge volumes of smoke blackening the whole firmament. Whatsoever it may be that builds them and lights their fires, these altars are evidently indestructible. Philosophy may frown but still they smoke. And their meaning is, that sin, in order to be remitted, must first be attoned for. The necessity of expiation is what they preach with their tongues of flame. But there is no real expiation in the blood of beasts and birds. Such victims take away no sin. The whole system of bloody sacrifices is therefore vain; a dismal cheat if it promises atonement; and pitiful at best, if it be only a confession that atonement is needed. Such is the dilemma of philosophy. Here on the one side is the admitted universality of sacrifice proving its connection with something indestructible within us; and on the other side the demonstration of its impotency.

From this dilemma Christianity offers the only possible escape. In the sufferings and death of Christ it sets before us a real attonement actually accomplished in history; an atonement eternally prepared, of course, since God himself, its author is eternal; an atonement which began its saving work by the very cradle of our apostate race. It was no mere show of condescension and of sympathy, enacted for moral effect, but a real thing. Christ actually suffered for us in his divine humanity, enduring mysterious and immeasurable agonies, that there might be a real satisfaction to the awful justice of God. Not God's honor only but God's own nature required it. This sublime work of attonement was to him, as well as of him, penetrating the very depths of his being, and answering a holy demand, which otherwise could have been answered only by the punishment of the guilty. It was not merely that he might safely pardon but that he might pardon at all. Pardon required some other basis than that of penitence in the offender; it required a basis of satisfied justice in God's own nature. And that basis was furnished by the sufferings and death of Christ. As for man, there was nothing for him to do, indeed there was nothing he could do but simply accept the attonement thus accomplished for him. He had only to confess his sin, and receive forgiveness on the ground of what had been done for him by another. In this way was Adam saved, if saved at all. It matters not that thousands of years were to roll away before the Son of Man should go as it was purposed for him. The lamb that taketh away sin was already slain—slain from before the foundation of the world, and faith had

only to await the historic consummation of an eternal act. But the goal was distant and the way was rough. And so the altar was built, and the victim brought, not of human impulse or invention, but by divine appointment; not for the taking away of sin but only to typify the real sacrifice. That this was too crude a ritualism, beneath the dignity of its alleged Original, let no one say who has ever heard of the holy walk of Enoch, who has ever heard of the tithes paid to Melchisedek as the representative of an economy older and wider than that of Abraham. We who have never used nor had need to use these types must be careful how we sit in judgment upon the pious men of the elder ages, whose faith embraced not an ascended but only a coming Saviour. To them these types were eloquent. The gleaming knife, which slew the shrinking victim pierced their own heart. The flame which leaped from the altar, pointed its red finger towards the throne at once of justice and of grace. And so these men were saved, as all men might have been. The system had certainly its limitations and its perils. There was always danger that type would usurp the place of antitype. There was always danger that atonement would be sought for in the sign, rather than in the thing signified. When thus emptied of its great meaning, the whole sacrificial system of course miscarried. No wonder the Greek philosophy made such havoc of the Greek religion. No wonder the time arrived when the masses thought all religions equally true, and philosophers thought them all equally false. Even among the Hebrews, faith withered into formalism. Indignant prophets accordingly denounced their temple service as an abomination. The lamb of the priest had ceased to be suggestive of the lamb of God. But the world has now a temple, an alter, and an offering not liable to such abuse. The sensuous types are all withdrawn. The real victim has been slain. The atonement has become an historic fact. And so faith marches out from amongst the shadows, to lay hold upon the substance. Philosophy which derided the former, cannot deride the latter. Human nature remains unchanged in its corruption, unchanged in its fears, unchanged in its craving for atonement; and there is no solid peace for the troubled conscience but in the blood of Christ.

3. The third distinctive feature of Christianity is Regeneration.

As already intimated, confession of sin is not confined to Christendom, and is no new thing in history. Universal sacrifice, of which we have just spoken, is itself a universal confession of sin. It stands confessed likewise in all literature;

then these alta... rest of all. In the
offense to reas... me, this confession
continent, and ... ary nature of man
the whole firm... in his Nicomachean
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tructible. Phi... Seneca; "some more,
their meanin... Paul in his Epistle to the
attoned for. ... ey are "by nature the
with their ... ...than philosophy has said
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dismal cl... ...ness of this confessed depravity,
be ... ...greatly at fault. Assuming a
dile... ...ey explained his present
uni... ...degeneracy. As Coleridge
ine... ...ction of a *fall* of man."
st... ...golden age of the race had been
... ...brass and of iron. Of course
... ...medy. And yet near the conclu-
... ...Resecting Virtue," there is the
... ...is neither natural nor
... ...come at all, by a divine
... ...power. Here at length is a
... ...from the helplessness
... ...of God.
... ...work by a better diagnosis
... ...the original rectitude
... ...asserts the Fall. As by one
... ...the world, and that one
... ...all men, it is seen that
... ...follows of course, that
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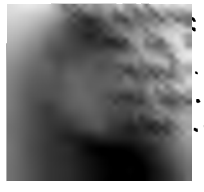

onward, wherever the Gospel went it darted a new light down into the depths of sin, and offered man the very intervention of which Plato had only vaguely dreamed. It sounded a new call to repentance, rendered more urgent by what was disclosed of the origin and malignity of the evil; and accompanied this new call to repentance with the offer of certain deliverance. Christ himself touched the very heart of the matter, when he told Nicodemus that he must be born again.

But the new birth is not merely a doctrine of Christianity; it is a work of the Spirit, pledged to attend the faithful proclamation of the Gospel in every age and in every land. Persuasion to virtue was the task and function of the pagan moralist. The offer of God's renewing grace is the taskand function of the Christian evangelist. And there is that in man which can be fatisfied with nothing less than what is thus offered in the Gospel. He knows that he has sinned. He knows that his nature is depraved. And he knows that he has no power to restore himself to the image and favor of God. It only remains for him to be told that the hand which first framed now offers to renew him. This, and this only meets his case. Made as we are, deliverance from the consequences merely of sin is not enough for us; we must be delivered also from the sin itself. It matters not what difference there may be of race, of language, of rank, of culture, of outward morality; it is enough that we all are human. The first Adam is forever repeating himself in his offspring. And the one imperative necessity of every child of Adam is, to be born again.

Such is Christianity in its grand distinctive features of Incarnation, Atonement, and Regeneration. These three features are all in the line of human reason, as is seen by reference to pagan philosophies and false religions; and yet are infinitely beyond and above human reason, as is proved by the fact so palpable to every candid inquirer, that no pagan philosophy or religion was ever able to grasp them. Christianity thus stands absolutely and sublimely alone; transcending every other religion by all the difference there is between a line which reaches only to the clouds, and a line which reaches to the very throne and bosom of the King eternal, immortal and invisible. And not only so, but it fully meets every want of our finite and fallen nature. Precisely those things which are peculiar to it as a system, are precisely the things we need. The conclusion is irresistible, that a system at once so unique and so essential must be of God. And if it be of God, then, as Gamaliel told the Sanhedrim, it cannot be overthrown. So long as man is man, and God is God so long must this religion stand, working its miracles of grace.

II. It remains for us to glance briefly at the past achievements of Christianity that we may determine whether or not it be actually advancing toward universal dominion. This we have need to do, not merely for the quickening of our own faith, but because an impression is abroad that Christianity can not very well endure this historic test.

It is not to be denied that there is a class of facts which at first sight, would seem to be hardly in keeping with the prophetic vision of universal conquest. Christianity, it is said has been constantly shifting its theater from race to race, from continent to continent; losing in the rear, as it gains in the van of its sounding march. Once its banner floated over Asia, even to the shores of the Yellow Sea. Once it waved up and down the Nile, streaming across the northern provinces of Africa to the pillars of Hercules. Once it rallied the Graeco-Roman civilization beneath its shining folds. Now, these conquests it is alleged have all been lost. Asia has gone back to her old religions; and Africa has gone back to barbarism. Arabia begat a prophet as well as Palestine; and at this hour, after twelve centuries of trial, more than a hundred millions of our race are Mahommedons. From Asia and Africa Christianity finally withdrew to Europe, and in Europe crept slowly to the north and west. The Greek and the Roman gave place to the Kelt, the Teuton, and the Slave. And even these have so soiled the banner they were elected to bear aloft, that it had to be brought across the Atlantic in quest of fresher breezes and a clearer sky. The older nations of Europe, it is ascerted, are now sinking to decay, as sank the nations which eighteen hundred years ago skirted the Mediterranean. Two young nations are now rising rapidly to power; on the eastern horizon imperial Russia; on this western horizon republican America. In less than half a century their united voice will dictate the fortunes of the world. But they, too must rot and perish, and the Christian banner committed to their keeping, again go trailing in the dust. So do some men amongst us interpret the annals of the past; and so do they cast the horoscope of the future.

But there is a sounder philosophy of history than this, and a brighter vision of the future. We admit apparent losses in the past; but we claim a real, and from the beginning till now, a steady gain. In numerical strength the gain has been immense The Christian Church passed out from beneath the hands of the Apostles with a membership, perhaps, of half a million. When persecutions ceased in the time of Constantine, at least ten millions, or about one tenth part of the population of the Roman Empire had taken the Christian

name. And now, of the twelve hundred millions supposed to be dwelling upon the globe, nearly one third part are at least nominally Christians. From an expansion of membership, so uniform and constant, we are at liberty to anticipate nothing less in the end than universal prevalence. As to losses of territory, and shifting theaters of conquest, these are of small moment in the great account. It is only the loss of puissant races of men which can tell against us in the historic argument. And no such loss has ever occurred. The Tartar and other races of central and eastern Asia, once gained over, in large numbers, by Nestorian and other missionaries, hold a low place upon the human scale. The Greeks and the Romans were the masters of the ancient world. And these have never died; nor discarded the Christian name. The Greeks are still a Christian people, ruled by a Christian king. The Italians are still a Christian people, rapidly uniting themselves under a Christian head. And both are commencing a new career, which bids fair to outshine the old. The Greek and the Roman Churches are certainly corrupt; but each bears upon its banner the name of an inspired Apostle, and those Apostles, Andrew and Peter, were brothers; each glories in the cross of Christ; and both must return eventually, to the simpler rites and the purer doctrines of their better days. As for the newer, and perhaps still nobler races of Northern Europe, they proved their inherent loftiness of moral temper by seizing with avidity the offered Gospel. Barbarians we have called those rugged men who overturned the Roman Empire, and trampled its glories underneath their invading feet. But for a hundred years or more, they had had the Scriptures in their own Gothic tongue; and when they crossed the boundaries of the Empire, as Niebuhar thought, were already Christians by a larger per centage than the race they conquered. And these Gothic tribes have never relaxed their hold upon the cross. For centuries, it is true, they wore the trappings of the papacy; but in time they sent forth Martin Luther, and gave us the Protestant reformation. From western Europe, thus recovered to the simplicity of the Gospel, sailed the heroes of faith and of freedom, whom we call our sires. Here at last is a Church without a bishop, and a State without a king; here at last is a Christian Republic, time's latest product, and its best. Just now, indeed, we are walking up and down the furnace of a great affliction; but the Son of God himself is with us amidst the flames, and He will see to it that nothing shall perish but our dross. We are no prophets, but we all of us discern a future now dawning on our horizon, over which the Hebrew prophets would have clapped their hands.

Over against us, as though to balance the globe, belting Northern Europe and Asia, nay, clasping round to meet us on our own Pacific shore, stands the great colossus of the European and Asiatic future; imperial, it is true, in government, and Greek in faith, but lifting his masses with him to intelligence and freedom, and destined to learn of us the great lesson of religious liberty for all men. France, I know, is Roman Catholic and aggressive; but the better faith of her Huguenots is steadily advancing; Protestant England with her heart of oak, stands armed and dauntless behind her cliffs; we ourselves will soon be ready for our task; and then the eldest son of the Latin Church will find no mischief which he will dare to do.

Millions of men, I know are still idolaters; millions of men are still Mohammedans; and millions more still worship Bramha and Budha. But a single Christian nation of western Europe outweighs them all. When these millions will begin in large numbers to accept the Gospel, we cannot tell; but we know that they need the Gospel, for they are men. And we know, too, that sooner or later they must receive it at our hands. Where the Gospel once went, winning its victories, it can go again. In the last strategy of the Christian centuries, of conflict Asia and Africa were indeed abandoned for a time, but our troops are returning to contest anew the ancient fields of victory, and already enough has been accomplished to make us confident in regard to the final issue. What we need now first and most of all is a better Christendom. Three hundred and thirty-five millions of mankind now answer the Christian roll-call; and they hold in their hands every art, every science, and nearly every resource of strength in existence upon the globe. Their lands are filled with plenty; and their commerce whitens every sea. Already they clasp the round earth in their stalwart arms; and it only remains for them to lift it up, and lay it upon the bosom of its Lord.

Such, my brethren, is the religion we have in charge; and such the triumph which awaits it. For its distinctive features, separating it immeasurably from all other religions, it has Incarnation, Atonement, and Regeneration. These are at once so much above our own invention, and so exactly suited to our case, as to prove a Divine Original. And what God must have ushered into history, will not be let to fail. Not His word only, but his whole nature stands pledged to victory. Nor is this a matterr of faith alone. Our faith is helped by sight. For eighteen hundred years the Christian Church has marched from conquest to conquest. The retreats and losses have been only temporary and apparent; the inva-

sions and the gains have been substantial and abiding. The end is sure. Every false system is yet to be exploded; and every idol is yet to be ground to powder. God grant that none of us may be deaf to such a drum-beat, leading the host of the Lord's anointed to such a conquest.

SERMON XXIV.

Preached on occasion of the National Thanksgiving, November 26, 1868, in the Fourteenth Street Presbyterian Church, late Dr. Asa D. Smith's.

BY REV. J. H. SEELYE,
OF AMHERST COLLEGE.

THE CONTEST BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND THE KINGDOM OF SATAN.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities; against powers; against the rulers of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness in high places."—EPH. 6 : 12.

The old Persian fable declared that there was not a particle of matter nor a point of space where the spirit of light and the spirit of darkness were not waging their perpetual warfare; and the Christian Scriptures represent that a struggle equally unceasing and universal is going forward upon the earth in the conduct of men. The contest is not between natural forces—it is not of flesh and blood—but it is a conflict of spirit against spirit, of good and evil, of light and darkness, of God and Satan. And this is the world's great warfare. History records the contests of nations and races, and paints for us the battle-scene where contending armies have struggled with the cannon and the sword for victory; but this is not the history of our world after all. Down below this surface of things there is the unseen contest through which every thing that comes to view has been directed. This outward appearance with which books of history have so much to do, is but the foam which breaks upon the ocean's breast at the heaving of its mighty depths, or the trembling which rocks the surface of the earth as its giant forces work within. The real struggle, and the true cause of all the struggles we behold, is that

unseen and spiritual contest which the taxt discloses: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities; against powers; against the rulers of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedners in the high places.

Let us contemplate more directly this contest:

I. Its scene.

II. The weapons employed in it.

III. The victory at which each are aiming.

I. We greatly mistake if we confine its scene to a single locality upon earth, or comprehend its working within a single sphere of human action. It reaches every place where the foot of man has trod, and embraces all the fields in which human activity has ever been shown. Every nation and tribe has furnished the combatants, and every continent and isle of the sea has witnessed the reality and the strength of the struggle. How far this warfare may be waged between other hosts than those contending here, we need not now inquire; it it sufficient for us to notice that the scene of it is everywhere upon earth and with men. The kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan are two antagonistic forces struggling for the mastery in every human soul, and in every department of that soul's working. There is no concord between Christ and and Beliai through which any legitimate sphere of human action is given up undisputedly by either party to the other—both are claiming all the soul's life, and both are struggling for it all. There is no province in which we can say, this is altogether good, and there shall no evil enter here; evil is already there, and will make itself apparent in our most sacred avocations. It follows us to the sanctuary and to the closet; it comes between our consciences and our God; it obscures the clear sense of duty; it blinds the interpretation of the divine command; it weakens the faith and clouds the hope and tints the character, even in the strongest and clearest and purest religious exercises. I believe there is no Christian who will not sympathize with this remark. I believe there are none who have not felt that when they would do good, evil is present with them, and that even in their highest flights of devotion, and their clearest vision of divine things, there was still a clog to bind them down to earth, and a cloud to intercept the brightness of that glory upon which they longed to gaze. It is as I suppose the experience of the soul even after its conversion, which leads it to cry out: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" It is true then that there is no field which Satan is willing to give up to Christ. He will not yield to

the Christian, undisputed possession of the Sabbath any more than of the week, and demands the mastery of the sanctuary and the closet as much as the shop and the counting-room. But on the other hand, it is also true there is no field which Christ is willing to give up to Satan. He demands the week as much as he does the Sabbath, and would have his spirit triumph in the work just as truly as in the worship of life. All the departments of worldly business, all the joys and pleasures of daily existence, he desires should be penetrated and controlled by his Spirit. He does not yield to Satan the undisputed possession and control of a single sphere of human life any more than Satan will yield it to him. "Whether therefore," he says, "ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." This then is the scene of the great contest. It is everywhere in human action. And this moreover, is implied by the very terms in which the text presents it: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood." This is not fighting at arm's length—it is not like two armies ranged face to face and firing at each other across some dividing line—but it implies that the combatants are interlocked in each other's embrace, struggling, wrestling, on the same foothold for the mastery. Bearing in mind thus the wide extent of the battle-field, let us notice:

II. The forces employed in the contest. We often say in general terms that the contending forces here are Christ and Satan, truth and falsehood, good and evil, and this indeed covers the whole grouud. But it must not be forgotten that just as the scene of this contest takes in the wholo range of human experience on earth, so the combatants embrace, on the one side or the other, every energy and purpose of the soul. There is not a thought, feeling, nor action proceeding from any member of the human family but is a weapon which Christ or Satan is using for the advancement and triumph of the kingdom of light or the kingdom of darkness. Every book that has been written, every word that has been spoken, every influence, great or small, has aided the progress of good or evil in the human heart and the history of the world. Nothing is indifferent; nothing is neutral. You may take the broadest scope you please, and inquire into the working of any thing ever thought or felt or done among men, and when you gather up its lines of influence, you will find them all ranged directly for Christ or for Satan. Science, literature, and art; philosophy and politics; agriculture, commerce, and manufactures —every product of human genius or industry has been a weapon in this great contest, a force employed by struggling

good or evil for its own triumph. We are apt to circumscribe a certain sphere of human action and call it the religious sphere, and to select certain exercises of the soul and denominate these the special agents in the soul's religious development; for every exercise favors or retards the soul's growth in holiness or sin. Paganism is not simply idolatry. We do not exhaust the meaning of any one of its systems by enumerating the gods which it recognizes or the rites of worship it imposes. It embraces the whole life of the people, the science and the philosophy, the institutions of the state and the family. It constructs the whole frame-work of society, and directs all the relations of man to man as truly as those of man to God. We are not apt to speak of science as religious, and yet the science of the Brahmin is the bulwark of the Brahmin's faith. We are apt to make a broad distinction between politics and religion, and yet the political constitution of China is not only intended as a favoring means for the Chinese religion, but is an essential element of it. So all through Paganism. Wherever it has unlimited influence it does not allow any thing to be dissociated from it. And if you take the kingdom of Satan in a still broader aspect, you will find it not only attempting to levy its tribute on every field of human experience, but attempting to bring all the varieties of human exercise into its own army and use them all as the host by which it shall conquer.

And it is not otherwise with Christianity. We greatly mistake if we say that Christianity belongs to this department of the soul and not to the other; to one sphere of human life and not to all. Christianity is not an art like that of the painter or the sculptor, which can be practiced only by the cultivated artist in a certain direction and with certain materials; nor a science such as the cloistered student pursues, who must leave every other avocation, that he may have no hindrance in his scientific toil; but it is a principle of living, and he who is guided by it is an artist who can turn in no direction but that the canvas for his picture is ever before him; and he who follows after it is a student who can pursue no process of investigation without finding every other truth leading him to a closer acquaintance with the truth as it is in Jesus. Human conduct and character may take on an infinite variety of forms; but in all this wide diversity one element is constant; in every family, in every individual heart there is the scene of a contest between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan, and in every thought and feeling and act of public or social or private life there is a weapon employed in the great contest, and used directly by one or the other of the two combatants for the triumph of his cause.

III. What now is implied in this triumph—what is the victory at which each is aiming? Every one would give a general answer to this question in the same way. It is the triumph of truth over falsehood, of good over evil in our world. But we are prepared, from the ground already surveyed, for a more specific answer. We are thus able to see that Christ and Satan are each aiming at the whole and undivided regulation of the human life in every department and through every faculty in which it is exercised. The whole world is to become the inheritance of the saints of the most high God, or it is to be peopled with incarnate feinds. Truth and justice and right are to triumph everywhere; the glad tidings of peace and good-will, which the angels sang when Messiah came, are to be repeated and welcomed to the uttermost parts of the earth; the reign of love and righteousness is to be seen in all authority and in all obedience; or every man's hand shall be against his neighbor, and fraud and violence and crime shall hold their undisputed sway, and war shall redden the earth more deeply than ever before with human carnage, and oppression shall strengthen still more the rod of the tyrant and the fetters of the slave.

This is the victory: Christ or Satan, truth or falsehood, righteousness or injustice, love or selfishness, peace or war, the elevation of mankind to their highest dignity and bliss, or their depression to the lowest possible degredation and despair; the song of unbroken gladness from a ransomed race, or the unmingled wailings which shall rise from a burdened and despairing world. Such is the result at which every individual at every moment of his life is aiming, whether he will it or not. Toward this result, on the one side or the other, the whole history of our world has been shaped in every age. History is no such play of dancing shadows as is often represented in the books which profess to narrate it, but it is the substantial wrestling of these two deep and mighty and spiritual forces in the thoughts and feelings and actions of men. The history of our world is nothing more nor less than the record how Christ has wrestled in the human soul and in human conduct, "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities; against power; against the rules of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Thus has it ever been; and the greatest event in history, or the least, will alike illustrate it. I do not know that there was a greater event in ancient history than the founding of Alexandria, or a more momentous day than that of Arbela; but to our eyes, removed so far from the obscurities of the times, how different are the real forces in those struggles from w[illegible]

appeared to the men who seemed to wage them! We can see that the question then at issue was not merely between Greeks and Persians—between races of men and sections of the globe—but between forces unseen to the bodyeven; between thoughts and ideas which, using men as their instruments, were struggling for a victory of life or death, from the time of Cyrus to the time of Alexander. It does not invalidate this in the least that the human actors in the contest were unconscious of it. Let it be that he who wept because there was not another world to conquer, had before his eye nothing but the lust of conquest, yet was there something quite other than this which controlled him, he knew not how or why. And it is only because we stand upon the vantage ground of more than twenty centuries of succeeding time that we can tell what it was and why it was. It is not fleets and armies—it is not physical force which rules the world. It is not men but ideas which are struggling for the mastery in the history of our race. It is the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan which are wrestling here, and God watches over the contest, giving strength from age to age to the right, never hastening its triumph, and never suffering it to be decided.

Napoleon is said to have uttered the sentiment that Providence is always on the side of the largest battalion. I know not upon what authority the saying is ascribed to him. It accords neither with his own fixed faith in destiny nor with the facts in his earlier or later career. But whether he said it or not, it is not true. Providence has not always been on the side of the greater physical force, for this is not the power which has been the most effective or triumphant in the world. What was the physical power of the crucified Nazarene and his eleven followers who forsook him and fled when he was apprehended—what were these to cope with the legions of Rome and the empire of the earth? Can a straw stem the ocean? Can a feather stand against the whirlwind? And yet hardly three centuries from the crucifixion a disciple of Christ sat upon the throne of the Cæsars, and the world lay at his feet.

Is there in modern times a greater battle, one upon which mightier results seem to hang, than that which was fought at Tours between the advancing hosts of the Saracens and the resisting bands of Christian Europe? But what was the physical power of Charles Martel to cope with that tide of steel which had overwhelmed Arabia, Persia, Syria, Africa, and Spain, and which swept on till it threatened to submerge the civilized world? The German bands which undertook to stay it were brave enough, and their leader was brave and

wise, but the torrent swept them resistlessly before it. It was not physical force which decided this most important battle at the end of the second day of the fight. According to the Arabian chronicler of the event, there rose amid the triumphant host, the cry: "The enemy are plundering our camps." No one could tell whence it came, nor why, but it spread through the army and touched the victorious warriors like the angel of the Lord. They turned back to defend their hard-earned spoil, and this appearance of retreat revived the drooping spirits and closed up the broken ranks of the Christians, and led them to an impetuous and successful onset. It was a providence on the weak and broken and almost vanquished side which turned the tide of battle and rolled back the advancing wave of Saracenic invasion. There were spiritual forces represented in the conflict, and these, though unseen, were more mighty than all the material agencies employed in it.

These instances illustrate the uniform law. That unseen contest, whose arena and forces and aims we have considered, lies beneath and shapes every event in history. All the movements of men which the natural eye beholds are but the direct expression of this spiritual struggle. And in this very truth do we find a most profound and permanent occasion for thanksgiving.

That all history is moved and molded by this struggle is of itself the indication of what must be the final issue. The struggle cannot be eternal. Its unending continuance would be of itself a triumph of the wrong. God has permitted it to come in order that the principalities and powers which have set themselves against him might be permanently overthrown. He will be the victor. Has he begun a work which he has not the power and will to finish? Nay, will not he finish it as he designed to do from the beginning, when he purposed to spoil his foes and make a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it? And may we not even now rejoice and praise him in the confidence with which we expect that he, having put all things under his feet shall at length ascend to his throne with the shout of a conqueror, and gladden his people with the glory of his perfect triumph? The enemy said: "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters." "The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself. The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of

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Is there something in a man's manhood which entitles him to respect quite above and independent of his color or caste or outward condition? Is the true constitution of society one that permits or that shall eternally prohibit human slavery? This is the question which has long roused and divided the nation, and which is at the present hour the mighty issue between contending armies. I know it is very common for us to say that we are fighting for the Government, the Constitns tion, the laws; but the real and controlling issue is something far deeper and more wide-reaching than this. Goverments and constitutions have very little moment in comparison with human rights and social privileges. They have very little worth except as means or instruments of these. They have perished ever. The shores of history are burdened with their wrecks; while every wind and wave and current in human affairs has borne the doctrine of human fellowship and brotherhood nearer to its haven. The question of society is far more important than any question of government can be. Our Government may or may not need a reconstruction, but this is of very little moment in comparison with the question whether those views of society out of which government springs, and by which all government must eventually be controlled, shall among us rest upon their normal basis of human brotherhood and Christian love; whether our social edifice, which is even now rearing amid the tumults of the times, shall show itself, when completed, like the city of God into which there shall enter nothing that defileth; and our land, which we trust God is renovating, though by blood, shall be everywhere not only united, but free—a land not only of law, but of liberty and love, wherein the sun, which this morning gathered his pavilion from the mists which rose round Mount Katahdin, and which to-night shall draw the curtains of his setting from the clouds which vail the Golden Gate, shall look down upon no rod of the oppressor and no fetter of the slave.

This is the question most controlling in the nation to-day. We may not like it; we may turn our backs upon it; but it sets itself before our face, and looks us in the eye. Men may try to cover it up, but how grandly does God uncover it by the movement of events, and hold it forth for our inspection! Our armies have advanced or retreated, but you will bear me witness that there has been no retrogression, but a continued onward march of the sentiment of freedom among us. Every month, every day, has witnessed not only a growing reverence for law and love of liberty for ourselves, but a growing purpose also that law and liberty shall be the boon of all men. Was our duty to the bondman ever so plain before the [redacted]

of the North as it is to-day? And is it not also true that our disposition to do the duty was never before so strong?

It ought not to surprise, and it need not trouble us, that the sword of steel has been drawn in this contest. We may wish it were otherwise; we may wish that the triumph of the Prince of Peace were fully come. We may long and pray for the hastening of the time when the voice of strife shall forever cease. But when that day shall dawn, the blessings which it shall shed, rich and abundant as the light upon the earth will be the blessings of the completed triumph; while the history of the world has only shown a struggle for the victory which it has not yet attained. But let us remember the nature of the struggle, that it is not with flesh and blood, though by means of these, but against "principalities, against powers, against the rules of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places;" and remembering this, let us not fear the result of our present commotions—not because man is wise nor institutions are mighty; not because the tocsin of war has been sounded, and our young men have gone up and are going forth strong and earnest for the struggle; not because of the victories upon land and by sea, which have filled us with joy, and for which we praise the God of our fathers to-day—not upon these let us place our hope. "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." It is the struggle of Christ's kingdom, and the Lord is king, blessed be his name forever. He who was annointed for the special work of preaching liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison-doors to them that are bound, will proclaim these glad tidings, and nothing shall stay the coming of this acceptable year of the Lord. What are nations, what are men, what are agents of time to this? He has time onough for it all, for he works even as he dwells in the fulness of his own eternity. "A thousand years are before thee as one day, and one day as a thousand years." He has not only time enough, but generations and nations sufficient for the result. "He increaseth the nations and scattereth them; he enlargeth the nations and straiteneth them again."

The tears which flow to-day over loved ones who have fallen need not be tears of unmixed grief. Not one of the brave departed has yielded up his life in vain. There are other interests in this struggle than those of flesh and blood; there are other ends to be gained by it than the eye of sense can ; and for these momentous issues there has been no fruit-offering. Not a tear, not a drop of blood, not an earnest t, not a noble soul has been given to this sacred cause for

naught. Not one shall be unrecompensed in the great result to which all have ministered; and not one shall be forgotten in the day of great remembrance, when all things now obscure shall see the light. There is an Eye which has watched where every hero fell; there is a heart which has sounded every depth of agony which this bitter strife has cost; there is a Hand, never weary and never at fault, which has garnered up and shall sow as fruitful seed for future harvests every work of self-devotion, every uncomplaining act of loyalty to truth and right and liberty and God. Oh! no, my friends, amid these tears, which it is right to shed, and these agonies which at times we cannot fail to feel; amid the weariness with which we think of toils already suffered, and the anxiety with which we wait for tidings yet to come—tidings which we always long, but often dread to hear; in the remembrance of all that is past and the uncertainty of all that is to come, we may yet rejoice, and this is a fit occasion of thanksgiving. We praise God that this struggle is his own, and that he is never defeated. We praise him for the victories already achieved, and the complete salvation he graciously permits us to expect at his hands. We praise him for every step of the way in which it has pleased him to lead us; for the days of darkness as well as those of sunshine; for the battles lost as well as the battles won. For in all these, in defeats as well as in victories, has he not guided us in the way we can now acknowledge to be the best, not only teaching us, by them all, new lessons of submission and patience and fortitude and courage and hope; but by them also enlarging our views of his plans, and strengthening our faltering resolutions to do his will? Therefore, do we praise him because "he bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. There is no king saved by the multitude of an host—a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. A horse is a vain thing for safety; neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waiteth for the Lord, he is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy, O Lord! be upon us, according as we hope in thee."

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

The Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting.

It is a matter of devout gratitude and thankfulness to God, who so continues to bless this consecrated place of prayer as to make it like the well-watered garden of the Spirit. No finite mind can measure or estimate the blessed influences of this daily prayer-meeting in its ever-widening and salutary effect on the souls of men, and the prosperity and progress of the Redeemer's kingdom. There is a manifest fresh baptism of the Spirit from day to day in a newly awakened interest above that in weeks gone by. The Spirit of God seems to inspire the devotions of the hour. This revival of interest, we think, is in direct answer to prayer. Christians have been praying for many days past that the Lord would revive his work. Now and then persons relate what God is doing by the power of his Holy Spirit in other places, and the fire kindles. Some rise and ask for prayer for themselves or others. Some relate the facts of their own recent religious experience. All this shows that the Lotd has not forsaken us.

Brigade Prayer-Meetings.

The following statements should stimulate the hearts of all praying ones to more earnest supplications for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the army. It seems almost a miracle of grace that souls should be awakened and converted amid battle-scenes. But nothing is too hard for God to accomplish.

A gentleman said he had been now about two years engaged in the Army of the Potomac. He was engaged in distributing, religious reading. He said he had just come from the army of the Potomac, and he was happy to say that there was a greatly increased religious interest among very many of the regiments in this branch of the service. Regimental and brigade prayer-meetings are held nearly every day in some portions of this army. Some of the chaplains had said to him that they could not discontinue the prayer-meetings if they would. The men demand them, and they must be held. Many are converted. Many are singing a new song, in whose mouths, not long since, were oaths and cursing and bitterness. It is a good time in that army. True there is a great deal of roughness and wickedness. But these men have tender hearts, and the Gospel can reach them. The gospel is good for the army. He had seen its power among the soldiers, as he had seen it nowhere else. "You will have to go into the army," said the speaker, "to know how much the Gospel is worth to a soul, and how unspeakably precious Jesus is to a believer dying with wounds or disease. Oh! how peacefully they die! It seems as if Jesus made up the lack of near and dear friends, and their kindly ministrations, by his more immediate and sensible presence. Come with me and see a soldier die, and you will feel all I feel. Only the other day I called upon a wounded soldier to know what I could do for him. I found him wonderfully calm and peaceful, lying upon the cold ground:

"'Can I do anything for you?' said I.

"'Oh! no; I want nothing. I have Jesus here with me, and he is all I want.'

"'But you can not live but a few minutes or hours.'

"'I know it; but I am in perfect peace. Please put my blanket over me, and cover my face over, and let me shut all out but Jesus, and so let me die.'

"I bid him farewell, and did as he desired, and left him with a face radian with joy, as I covered it with his blanket, and as he said: 'Good-by.' Oh! come with me to the army if you would know all the Gospel is worth to the soul."

The Boy-Missionary.

At the Fulton Street Prayer-meeting many striking incidents are related which are instructive and impressive. They are the fruits of the Spirit in answer to prayer. They should increase the faith of Christians, and warm

their hearts in more active efforts in every good word and work. The following are the beautiful illustrations:

A gentleman told the story of a boy who had been a member of a Sabbath-school somewhere at the East, who was taken West and bound out to a farmer in a neighborhood where there were no Sunday-school and no religious services of any kind. The boy was exceedingly uneasy, and felt that he could not live so. He heard of a missionary fifteen miles off, and he resolved to go and see him, and ask him to come and organize a Sabbath-school. So away he trudged all the fifteen miles on foot, and had a wide river to cross, to see the missionary. He spread before him the condition of the neighborhood, and begged him to come and start a Sabbath-school. The missionary came; a Sabbath-school was started. and now, said the speaker, in that place, where there were no Sabbath-school and no means of grace, there is a church of forty members. So much a little boy can do.

Another gentleman from the West said he would relate a case somewhat similar. An Eastern little boy was bound out to an old farmer, who became very much attached to him; but he perceived the boy was very disconsolate. He asked what was his trouble? The lad said he had no Sabbath-school to go to and no church, and he could not live so.

The old man said: "Here is so much money; see how much others will give, and we will have books and organise a school, if that is what you want."

The neighbors contributed; but some doubted about starting the school, for there was no one to open it with prayer. The lad said he would pray if no one else would; so the school was opened. The speaker said he would make a long story short by saying that not long afterward, that old man of eighty and that little boy were sitting together at the same communion-table to celebrate the sufferings and death of our ever-blessed and adorable Saviour, who came to seek and save the lost, the old and the young.

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SERMON I.

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THE FINAL CONFICT.

". . . The battle of that great day of God Almighty."REV. 16: 14.

WE open the book of God's written revelation to-day, to the stirring of these martial words, to this majestic imagery of war. It is no collision of outposts of which we thus read, no trifling skirmish upon which we come, but the final conflict where host meets host in the grapple that shall never be parted till one of them bites the dust, and God himself in his omnipotence takes the field. We open too to-day the book of God's revealing providence, amid the same imagery of embattled forces, imagery not ideal and rhetorical, but sternly and grimly visible and real. The New Year gives us its salutation on these American shores not by the ringing of joy-bells through all the peaceful villages, and above the hazy and quiet air of great cities, but by salvos of artillery from a hundred waiting batteries, behind which lie armed squadrons eager for the trumpet's blast and the leader's word. The noon of the nineteenth century, this latest century of light and Christian progress, is past, and yet the voices we are listening to, upon the birthday of another year are not the voices of a great human chorus giving back an echo to the angelic, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth PEACE, good-will unto men," but voices chanting such psalms as this :

"All forward! All forward!
All forward to conquer! Where free hearts are beating.
Death to the coward who dreams of retreating;
Liberty calls us from mountain and valley;
Waving her banner, she leads to the fight.
Forward! all forward! the trumpets are crying,
The drum beats to arms, and our old flag is flying;
Stout hearts and strong hands around it shall rally;
Forward to battle for God and the Right."

It would not be strange if the events of the past three years in our land should have contradicted and revolutionized many popular ideas as to the methods of human progress. It has been the thought of most of us, perhaps, that the early ages of human history, or those ages that antedate history might be ages of turbulence and passion, of strife, commotion and blood; but that out of those great fierce struggles the race would emerge into light and peace and order. Can we not point to the softening and ameliorating influences and effects of an advancing Christian civilization? Have we not seen times of barbarism receding into the gloomy past, and hiding themselves behind the dim Eastern sky, out of which, since, the dawn has risen? The age when "might made right," has not that sunk, like a fiery constellation of the night time? The age of free-booting; that kept its strongholds along the castled Rhine of human story, when mail-clad robbery watched for prey like a hawk from its eyrie, and swept down into the vales of lowly and undefended life, and snatched the fruits of peaceful and honest industry for its own spoil, and behind inaccessible battlements, within portcullis and drawbridge, sated itself upon its plunder—has not the growing supremacy of law, the mightier sceptre of moral ideas diffused on all the atmosphere of mind, banished this rough and rude age from the dwelling-places of men?

Have we not expected that the marches of human progress would be more and more *peaceful* marches? that, in proportion as we gained from past epochs, the gain would be evinced by multiplying scenes of public tranquility, chaining down certainly all ferocious human passions, transforming beasts of prey, if not into angels of mercy, at least into harmless lambs, and marking the victorious Christian age as an age of universal brotherhood and love? Doesn't this idea correspond with the language of prophecy: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid and the calf, and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them?" We have looked then to see the rough places of the earth made smooth, the wilderness becoming a garden; instead of the thorn, the fir-tree; instead of the brier the myrtle-tree; the sword beaten into the plowshare; the spear converted to a pruning-hook; to hear less frequently of wars and rumors of wars; to see the ties of amity binding the

nations together, and the families of each nation dwelling side by side under the domed roof of their common country, like brothers and sisters in the same household home. Our idea of the coming of a millennium has been this gradually victorious uprooting of evil; the gradual and proximate bringing in of good; loss to wrong and guile and crime by successive depletion; gain to right and honesty and virtue by slow augmentation, till the one force was in a hopeless minority, and finally outlawed from the earth, and the other was in a triumphant ascendency, its sceptre daily strengthening, till at last it was all undisputed. The process, as we fancied it should be, as we thought our eyes beheld it, was like that of breaking day—a little fading of the deep darkness, not to be succeeded by blacker night, but to gather added beams; the blackness paling more and more; the east brightening faster and ever faster; clouds indeed lingering and vapors hanging low with their misty vale over earth's bosom; but the monarch light, the upleaping sun, touching even clouds with resplendent beauty, and making the vapors warm and rosy as a flush of virgin joy. Why, what is Christianity doing, if she is not effecting the actual introduction of this reign of peace! Is she not harnessing idleness and vice to honest and soul-saving industry? Is she not testifying against war? Is she not administering to men and nations her great pacific panacea, "Thou shalt not covet?" Is she not bridling human tempers, curbing the human tongue, inculcating meekness, forbearance, and forgiveness, and diffusing through the public mind the radical leaven of her golden rule; and so making wars impossible as fast and as far as she scatters abroad her olive leaves? Has she gained nothing in all this long and costly crusade which she has been prosecuting since she sewed the cross to her breast, and, like Constantine the Great, read her commission in the heavens. "In hoc signo, vince"—"by this symbol; conquer?"

How men talked about the Crimean War! How we all talked, preachers and moralists, and every man with the hope in him that the kingdom of the Devil should become the kingdom of our Lord! We said: There may be sanguinary combats among Tartar and Zulu tribes and on cannibal coasts, but there can never be any great war again between Christian nations. And we enumerated to ourselves the reasons for our positive conviction. We said: Chrisitanity is against it, and Christianity is a high force on the earth. Commerce is against it, and commerce is next to omnipotent with some nations, sitting in the very place of Jehovah. Treaties are against it; the Church is against it with all her ministry and teachings; the testimony of the past, the richest investments of the present, the hopes of the future; the world's best progress—against it; and while these words were on our lips, the mighty thunders of battle woke, and the earth reeled with the shocks of the

spurning and quaking artillery; her veins ran red with blood, and her bosom was scarred with war's multitudinous and hurried graves.

Is it not more than possible then, after all, that we have mistaken the character of the final triumphs of humanity and Christianity? Are they to be peaceful triumphs? The issue is to be peace and quietness, love and harmony. Are the victories to be the soft and gentle overcoming of light and truth, winning their way by just reason and persuasion? Or are they to be gained in the bloodiest grapple of the long-opposing forces which the pen of history ever had or ever shall have to record?

That is the question I raise to-day? Whence shall we seek light for its solution?

1. In the first place, it lies level to the most superficial observation that this, our earth, was chosen of God as the theater of a great judicial conflict. This world is not a pleasure-garden in God's realm, in which white-footed and barefooted angels may walk at the cool of day, fearing no thorns or flinty roughness, and inhaling only the fragrance of roses and spices. It is not a place of idle sauntering for any citizens of God's empire, just giving grateful shade, and musical with birds and fountains. It is a rough battlefield, on which Good and Evil are met to strive for the mastery. All the good are on one side and all the bad on the other, and there are no neutrals. Natural humanity is on the side of evil, for it is full of that spirit of selfishness which is the spirit of disruption, of disunion, of rebellion—the spirit of the devil. The conflict is not for the possession of this one province of the empire merely, it is to decide great principles in God's moral government, which his creatures must see in history before they fairly measure them or render them due homage. It is to teach the spirit of rebellion what alone such a history and such an experience can teach, and by the memory and the record of this strife and its issue, confirm from thenceforth all loyalty forever. It would not be strange then at all, if in a world so purposed and elected, the conflict should ever be keener; the progress be not more and more pacific, but more and more troubled and stormy; the struggle should ever gather to itself on either side more masterful forces, and the final battle be more resolute and deadly, as it is to be more determinate than any that have gone before.

2. But let us, in the second place, descend for a little from the broad view, to details of the engagement, and see how the strife goes in the individual heart—what the law of progress, and what the character of the most decisive victories. Leave out the more spiritual aspects of the conflict for a moment, and come in upon one who is wrestling with some evil habit. Here is a man trying to break away from the bands of intemperance.

His first efforts are feeble and ineffectual. His convictions of the stern nature of the struggle are not yet what they will need to be before he can succeed. He doesn't understand the power of his adversary. All his measures are mild, all his efforts are languid. He thinks he shall gain an easy victory. He seeks to overcome by gradual breaking away from the fetters cast upon him. The strain reveals something of their massive and steely strength. He tries gentleness and moderation long enough to see that they only play into the hands of the enemy. It begins to dawn upon him that nothing but a terrible final duel can lay his enemy prostrate. Now the grim appetite rises in its strength. The soul seeks to put on power. It thinks of whatever may stimulate its prowess—property wasted, health blasted, name dishonored, family comfort and peace desolated, life imperiled—and meets the dread hour. It has need of all the heroism it can summon up. It never knew till now what the contest must be, and more than once now, doing its best, it may be worsted. It must yet put forth a more desperate strength. The battle that wins for it deliverance, that breaks the tyrant's scepter, will be the fiercest battle of the war.

So it is with all the vices—with every evil habit. When the soul's alarm is first excited, the emotion is no ways commensurate with the greatness of the hazard. It is a new idea that there is danger. Pride and self-confidence receive it slowly. The first declaration of war is civil and conciliatory. But the bonds are not broken so. At length the nature of the crisis is perceived, and the battle is joined in deadly earnest. This is the battle that wins the day. Not till then is there hope of disenthrallment.

Is it not thus with the more spiritual struggles for the new spiritual life? The soul begins perhaps by entertaining graver thoughts. That is well, but that doesn't end it. It isn't even the beginning of the end. It reasons with its wild and lawless propensities. The headstrong rioters laugh at such proclamations. They are paper-bullets. It seeks to realize an outward reformation. This is no more than cutting off the outposts of evil—shooting down a picket or two. It tries exercises, Bible-reading, praying, good-willing, but only to discern more clearly how immovable the heart. The heart is yet securely intrenched. The citadel has not been carried. The soul becomes more in earnest, and the forces waken and multiply on either side—the truth pleads, and conscience, and fear, and the Holy Ghost, and the world pleads—and the flesh and the adversary. This will be another struggle from any that have gone before. It will be a striving unto blood. It will be a grapple for life or death. The soul, if it wins, comes out of it after all, pale and spent, with scarce strength to raise the shout of victory.

Is not this private and individual strife an epitome of the

larger—the public—the universal and comprehensive struggle? Are not the final conflicts ever the most desperate? Is not the fact of hopeful progress declared, not by increasing pacification, but by the growing sternness and fierceness of the contest?

Let us go up again now unto the levels of the conflict. Evil has been long a worker in the world which God made. It has wrought subtly and diligently. It has leavened with a terrible universality. It has penetrated every human heart, and has some hold there still, It has pervaded government, and laws, and institutions, and literature, and customs, and religions, and has mighty forces under every one of these banners on its side. Yielding the earth at first to its over-running, in due time God enters the lists against it. A foothold is gained for right, for truth, for righteousness, for virtue, for whatever names and forms the GOOD may assume. But a foothold is not a conquest. There must be forces and weapons with which to wage the war, and achieve the conquest. How long and slow the process of forging and tempering such weapons, and enlisting, drilling, and training to victorious warfare, such forces! There must be a banner uplifted for Jehovah. It is put into the hand of Seth, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham—but a few unarmed patriarchs can't subdue the earth. The Church must be born; must be led through the wilderness; must measure its valor with Amalekites and Canaanites. A Bible must be first enacted, then written, then attested, then shown to be puissant over the mightiest intellect, over the hardest heart. The Church and the Bible must diffuse light, put into circulation great ideas, enlist human thought and speech, build up impregnable arguments, call into their service the numbers of kindling and martial songs, array and discipline their enthusiastic volunteers, till they move with the steady front and even tread of veteran armies, and are furnished with the most effective artillery the progress of science has invented. In all this forward movement they are, of course, minor victories. Every step of advance is in its measure a triumph; but the great battle is yet to be. This is but bringing up the cohorts of war. All this takes time, costs treasure, requires patience and faith. A Bible isn't made in a day. A Church equipped and disciplined for this world's conquest is not gathered in a day. The work of enlisting, drilling, and arming is a work of slow ages. Meanwhile, by all this gain, evil is not put to route; on earth is scarcely weakened. Evil avails itself also of the improved methods of warfare—calls in science, and art, and philosophy, and metaphysics, and exploration, and human experience to its own aid, and as God's host puts on daily courage and strength, so evil summons heart and audacity to abide the shock. The future then of the contest is yet to be the bloodiest and *the most* eventful. And our advance toward this

ing future is not, as we had supposed, to be more and more undisputed, but to be amid deepening peril, and constantly nearing the onset and the carnage.

The Scripture, which we have taken as our starting point to-day, furnishes us with a most vivid, because pictorial, view of the definite forces of evil combining for this last issue. "And I saw," says the Revelator, "Three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." And these three are the spirits that have gone forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to God's great battle. The three prophetic symbols here named —"the Dragon," "the Beast," "the False Prophet"—are understood to be the old serpent, who is the arch enemy of God and man, and the originator of all evil; and anti-Christian power of Papal Rome, and the great Mohammedan imposture. In the later times, and the last conflicts, these will not appear perhaps as old historic forces and vitalities, in their own elder and proper forms, but issuing forth from them, their legacy and progeny of evil to curse the world, and defy the truth, three subtle, powerful, and malignant spirits, will take up the championship of falsehood and wrong. That which proceeds from the mouth of the Dragon will be in an especial manner the force of direct and vital spiritual wickedness—that which attacks all religion and owns the authority of none—THE MIGHT OF OPEN INFIDELITY AND RANK ATHEISM, with its concomitants of licentiousness, blasphemy, and every abominable and shameless corruption. That from the mouth of the Beast represents infallible headship and tyrannical absolutism, and is coincident with all manner of civil wrong and political oppression. It is the spirit of despotism, injustice, slavery, cruelty, and all that opposes the rights and the manhood of man. The third is a lying spirit, clothed in light as though a messenger from God, and teaching fatal error under the guise and sanctities of religions claiming to be authentic and divine. It is the spirit of false and prostituted religions.

When these three combine against God and his people—Sadduceeism, with audacious head: Absolutism, with a chained fellow-man beneath its heels; and False Religion, binding and loosing human consciences with a lie—then will that last great battle be joined; whose fortunes and whose fluctuations will issue in giving the kingdom to the saints of the most High God.

There will yet be such a combination. There is yet to rock the perturbed earth the tumult of that battle-day. Evil is not to be quietly dispossessed of its seat in this fair provice of God. It holds by immemorial possession. It shall please [redacted] show the full prowess of truth. The mightiest rally[redacted] its united strength will be permitted. Gog and Mag[redacted]

gathered to the war. The False Prophet, the Beast, and the old Dragon will consolidate their divisions in one dread array. Christianity will advance her banner, and sound her charge. Corsidering what she is called to encounter, considering the long historic past, considering all the prophetic intimations, it will not be strange if she is called to contend against carnal weaponry. While her heralds are publishing her edicts, and echoing her voices of love and mercy, the institutions that spring up under her nurture, guarding the rights of man, and preserving the unity and integrity of states, may demand for their rescue and defense, that sword be opposed to sword, and the assaults of violence be rolled back by strong arms and dauntless hearts. That "Armageddon" of the Lord, on which evil, with all its myrmidons, is finally to fall down slain, will be, we believe, not figuratively, but in some part of it, and in the high places of the field, literally, an "aceldama." There will be "the thunder of the captains," "with confused noise and garments rolled in blood."

Let it not, then, shake our faith in God, or in prophecy, or in human progress, that we are seeking to-day, as this New Year opens, to steady our feet upon a continent shaking and rocking in the convulsions of civil war. This is not retrogression, but advance; not a sign of failing, but an occasion of firm establishment. Did we believe that an experiment such as ours, striking so fatally at the yet vital spirit of Absolutism among the nations, would be suffered peacefully to succeed? That were against the testimony of all the past. The gigantic rebellion that leapt at the throat of our national life had its inspiration in the life of that second spirit of evil, that hoarse murmuring, loquacious, arrogant, inflated, slimy, and polluted frog of political tyranny and oppression. Its first success was incidental to the largeness of the freedom we give to citizens of all the land, and the right of representation and protection for every interest. And the question poising now as the scales of battle waver; the question on whose issue mankind waits; the question which is our sacred national trust from heaven, is this: "Can Law and Liberty dwell together?" For the triumphant solution of that question we are giving our millions of treasure, and the dearest and redest blood of our homes and our veins. Too much we can not give. Here pauses the march of humanity. If it go forward, it must go forward over prostrate rebellion, its life trampled out forever. If we fail to meet this stern summons, we have ignominiously laid down our arms in one part of God's great battle-field.

But we shall not fail. The battle is God's. He has awoke us to its grandeur. He has given us power to wage it well. He will raise us up heroes to go before us. He will curb the unfriendliness of foreign nations, eager to humble us in the

strait of our great trial. He will make war itself an educator for our youth and our childhood, in all manly, heroic, and noble virtues. The nurture of war depends upon what men are fighting for, whether on the side of evil or good. We have no questions of diplomacy, of policy, of intrigue, to settle with any earthly power. But the one question of *what is right and just and lawful* with all cabinets and nations.

Let no man's heart tremble that the year opens under such auspices. We ought to be grave. Nero fiddled while Rome was burning. We are not to usher in the year with festive dances, rather with self-sacrificing purposes and fervent prayers. But let us be calm and hopeful. Let us be true and faithful. We may see darker days yet before the cloud passes by. Let us not blench or despond. Let us never repent of doing right and maintaining right. We are fighting on God's side, and can afford to take the issue with him. The year that has closed has been the strangest in Time's long chronicle. The year upon which we have entered may be the most eventful. But let us not doubt that, if we are loyal to our trust, beyond this chasm that has opened deep and wide across the breadth of our land, it will seem that Humanity, the cause of Freedom and Righteousness, and the kingdom of Christ, have advanced within this one troubled year, as by more than the slow ripening of a century in the quiet years and the sluggish histories when the temple of Janus is shut.

So purposing, so believing, and so hoping, let us exchange again the old cheerful, and prayerful salutation of the season, for one another, for the loyal North, for the whole land and our fellow-man: "A happy New Year!"

SERMON II.

BY REV. J. M. SHERWOOD.

DECAY OF FAMILY POWER.

"And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."—MALACHI 4: 6.

The text is in the form a prediction. The Old Testament closes with the remarkable announcement, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and notable day of the Lord," and the object and effect of his mission shall be what is set forth in our text; namely, to reform mankind, and bring the world back to those elementary principles or institutes, ordered of old for human improvement and salvation. Elijah was raised up for the special work of reforming the Jewish nation of its horrible wickedness under the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, and restoring it to the divine favor. And John the Baptist, the Elijah of the Gospel dispensation, was to come "in the spirit and power of Elijah" to call the world to repentance, and prepare it to receive the Messiah, his special mission was that of a reformer. He came to preach repentance. "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," was the burden of his cry. The nation was not in a state to receive the Gospel. It was gross, sensual, and devilish. The very foundations of virtue were worn away, and needed to be relaid. Degeneracy and corruption were so deep-seated and universal that it was necessary to begin at the beginning; not with the church, or the state, or society, but with the family, the fountain of moral influence, and build up again the family constitution which irreligion and vice had overthrown; "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers," that the curse of God might be averted.

We have here, then, the Divine plan of reforming and saving mankind. This prophetic utterance has application to all ages and nations. It embodies the wisdom of God, and is entitled to our serious consideration. The ministry of John the Baptist, in its aims and effects, was meant to forshadow the ministry of Jesus Christ and the genius of the Gospel—the practical workings of those principles which are to regenerate human society, and Christianize the world. Christianity is God's ordained instrument to plant and extend his kingdom on earth; and, contrary to the teachings of the schools, and the *expectations* of the wise, it shall not do this by the power of

the state, by the force of law, by ecclesiastical organisms, by the influence of fraternities, or by means of patronage, learning and wealth, but by simply recognizing and invoking the original elemental principles of society; by going with the Word and Spirit of God down to the foundation of all life and all government; by simply "turning the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers."

The teaching of the text is this: The Gospel seeks to accomplish its mission of life by the power of Family Religion—by invigorating and purifying the family constitution—by drawing closer and sanctifying the bonds of domestic affection and life; and if it fails to do this, it fails of its end; and the curse of God will smite the earth in punishment of the neglect, and for the sin and corruption consequent upon it. To "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers," is descriptive of the effect of the Gospel on the family. Affection is the great family bond, and the chief element of power in domestic life. And Christianity appeals powerfully to the affections of our nature. There is a mighty force in it to excite and purify, to strengthen and exalt them. Let it once enter and rule a family, and it will direct and intensify the affections, deepen the love and interest felt toward each member of the little circle, invest with new responsibilities the relations of life, and call forth more earnest effort for the welfare of the entire household. Now "the heart of the fathers is turned to their children" in the spirit of yearning tenderness and inexpressible solicitude, and "the heart of the children" responds in the spirit of filial love and obedience. Now family affection and influence and intercourse are sanctified to the Lord and to the high ends of rational life. Now family government is wisely administered, and the family institute is duly honored and made to subserve the great ends of God's moral government, and becomes a powerful auxiliary of the State and the Church in maintaining social order and virtue. A family not under a religious training and influence is a fountain of social corruption. God classes such families with the heathen, and threatens to pour out his fury upon them. It is the guilt and irreligion and corrupting influence of such families which cause the earth to be smitten so often and so tearibly "with a curse." Here, at the foundation, the work of mischief and ruin begins. Here are the sources of infidelity and vice and disorder, of social, political, and religious declension and overthrow.

Is there a widespread corruption of morals pervading society? Are patriotism and integrity wanting, and the pillars of the nation trembling? Is the spirit of revivals almost dead, and the work of conversion well nigh ceased? Has God begun to smite the land with a curse, and are the signs of the times full of alarm? Depend upon it, the main, the primary ca[illegible]t

all may be traced up to the Family. The neglect, the sin is there. This fundamental elementary institution is not honored but abused and perverted. The heart of the fathers does not go out after the children, seeking by prayer and discipline and faithful instruction their early conversion to God, and their right training for the high duties of life; and the heart of the children is not turned to their fathers in the spirit of reverence honor and obedience. The Fifth Commandment is broken, and the promise annexed is forfeited. Depravity is not taken in hand in season, and it grows strong, and breaks over restraint, and corrupts society, and provokes the judgments of God by its excesses.

There are three fundamental agencies by which Divine Wisdom seeks to reform and save the world—the Family, the State, and the Church. They sustain most intimate relations to each other. They underlie all goodness, all prosperity and order. To destroy or impair one of these agencies is to undermine the hope and welfare of the world. They are the foundations which eternal Wisdom early laid and which eternal Providence has preserved to the righteous amidst the decay and change of six thousand years. They are essential to the world's salvation. And not the least important of the three is the family. It is more radical than the others, and they can not exist without it.

It is a wonderful arrangement, this division of the whole human family into little separate communities, each community a little government, a miniature world by itself—marriage the foundation, love the bond, and divine authority the governing power. Such an arrangement, simple as it is, touches all the elementary and radical principles of human nature. The family power is the fountain of all moral power in the world. Without such an agency we can not see how religion could ever have gained a footing in it. During all the patriarchal ages the family alone preserved the knowledge and worship of God. But for such an arrangement, the religion of the Bible could not have survived the flood, could never have been separated from the polytheism which again quickly overrun the earth, and secured to itself a righteous seed through the family of "the father of the faithful." It was the family which first gave religion root in our fallen nature; which secured the covenant of promise, on which rests the whole fabric of God's kingdom on earth—which laid the foundation of the Jewish state and church, and finally gave a Redeemer to the world. Without such an institution, not one of all these things, so essential to man's redemption, could have been accomplished. And without it, even in this ripe age of the world, society could not be kept from relapsing into barbarism and universal corruption. Now, as ever, in the sanctity of marriage as originally ordained, in the purity and strength of the domestic vir-

tues and ties, and in the training of the family, are the radical elements of individual and national life and redemption.

We can not estimate the full value of such an agency. We can not tell all its vital bearings on the kingdom of Christ, and on the world at large. It takes man from his mother's breast and educates him for life. It cradles him amidst influences and associations the strongest and the holiest, to move and mould human character. It gives direction to the mind, and to all the forces of one's nature. It lays scarcely felt yet powerful restraints on depravity. It accustoms one to obedience. It tends to form the habits aright. It nurses and develops the better part of man's nature. And when the proper place is given to religion in the family, it becomes the most efficient agency for salvation. The converts of the Gospel mostly come from well-governed and godly families.

Where the family power is neglected or perverted, religion has nothing to build upon; depravity is left to do its work unchecked. What power has society to restrain or reform, or the doctrines and institutions of the church to teach and regenerate the children of an ignorant, unrestrained, disobedient parentage? The only sure way to build up Christ's kingdom; to make society intelligent and virtuous, and secure to the state the elements of real strength and prosperity, is to make the family what it should be. The bonds of domestic life must be drawn close and made vital with Gospel light and love. The household must be sanctified. An altar to intelligence and virtue and piety must be built on every hearthstone. Religion must hallow the songs of the nursery, and teach infant lips to pray, and urge on childhood the lessons of goodness, and pervade the entire intercourse and relations of home with its heavenly influence. There is hope for the state and hope for the world so long as religion finds a home and an altar in the Family. If some fearful judgment were to sweep away the visible Church and dash down the State, with the aid of the Family, under God, we could lay anew, as Noah did after the flood, the foundations of both, and build up the superstructure stronger and better than it was before.

It was mainly the virtue of the Family that planted and nourished the New England colonies, and laid such broad and deep foundations for the church and the state in this new world. The fear of God, and the love of liberty, reverence for law and order, thrift, and energy, and forethought, these were the virtues which our pilgrim sires taught their children. And had the character of the Puritan Family been rigidly maintained, and its influence been made paramount in all the land, this accursed rebellion which is now spilling the life-blood of the nation, and endangering our very existence, had never been. *The South has no Family institution as God ordained it.* And the New England home, where it exists, has lost much of its

high character. Much is being said on the subject of reconstruction, when the rebellion shall have been put down. Politicians and statesmen are ready with their remedies and measures; but not one of them all will reach the real difficulty, and build up a permanent and prosperous union and greatness. Political reforms, constitutional provisions, legislative enactments, emancipation, and confiscation, victories in the field, and a masterly administrative policy—none of these things will heal the deadly wound, and remove the cause of this civil strife. The nation must begin anew; and it must make thorough work of it. It must come back to first principles, and educate the rising generation to fear God, and eschew evil, and love our country, and meet the obligations of Christian citizens, and cherish a forgiving spirit, and strive for the things that make for peace. We must rebuild the foundations and make them vital once more with prayer, and godliness, and the spirit of obedience, or we shall never dwell together in peace, and be that happy people whose God is the Lord.

It were better to discard every other agency in our efforts to save the nation and the world, than the Family institution. If its radical power be not invoked, all our toils and sacrifices will be futile. If the children be not looked after, and educated and trained at home in their early year, in the right way, in vain will the State seek to guard their morals and prosper them, and the Church strive to win them to Christ.

There is no agency that can be substituted for the Family. It is a shallow and miserable philosophy which would set it aside, or endeavor to improve upon it. He who knows the heart of man, and all the workings of depravity, and the bearings of every sort of agency and influence, has himself appointed the Family, and invested it with all its power of influence, and its authority and responsibility. He has made it also a permanent and radical institution. It belongs to all time, to universal humanity. It has the first and chief place assigned to it in the economy of Providence. And from its very nature it admits of no change. It cannot be tinkered with or modified. This prodigious power for the proper social and religious training of your children—an agency beginning with their existence and spread out in its effects over their whole life—God has ordained and put into your hands, and you only are responsible for its exercise. No man, no association, no law, can take that right from you, nor share the responsibility with you. There is reason to fear that a change of sentiment and practice has come over the country on this subject. The Family no longer occupies that high and sacred position which it did in the earlier days of our history. There is less of reverence and importance attached to it. There is less attention and pains given to the cultivation of the home virtues, and the wise training and development of character under the foster-

ing influence of parental love. Family instruction and family religion are not so faithfully attended to. The reins of family government are slackened. Parental authority is not exercised and respected as it once was. The influence of home is less potential on character, and much of its sanctity is gone. Society—a modern but expressive word—has come, in a great degree, to take its place and exercise its prerogatives. What the Family once was to man—his instructor, his life, his solace and power—Society has grown to be. Society has come to overshadow the Family and dictate opinions and laws to the world. Society is the one idea which now early gets possession of the mind. Society is the influence which moulds opinions, and shapes character. Education has come to be essentially based on the tastes and maxims which prevail in Society. The family life is regulated by Society. Society forms the marriage contract, disposes of our children, and settles the grave questions involved in life and duty. Society steps in between the parent and the child, and overrules parental fear and love, and the maxims of the Bible, and the lessons of Providence, and decides how the family power shall be exercised; to what ends and on what principles our children shall be trained. In instances without number, the hearts of the fathers are not turned to the children, nor the hearts of children to their fathers, but both to society. There are tens of thousands of families in our land to-day who have no such head, distinct, personal and responsible, as God ordained in the Family arrangement; they have really no father, no mother but Society. Society owns them; society rears them; society educates them; society forms their principles and habits; society directs their aims and disposes of them. The father virtually vacates his sacred office for a usurper to fill. The mother hands over her infant to a stranger to bring up; and it often draws its nourishment, its life's blood, not from the mother, but from an alien. Society invades the nursery with its false ideas, and superstitious stories, and artificial training. Childhood and youth hear only of society, and are taught to think only of society, and mind and heart are developed mainly with reference to society. A fashionable education is given them, i. e., they are unfitted for home life, and home duties, and educated to play their part genteely in society. And when their education is complete they are given over to society, and given up to it.

And what can be expected of those who have received such a training? Where is the Family institution, with its sacred relations, and holy influences, and moulding forces, in such a state of things? What sort of home influence will such persons carry with them into life? What sort of husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, citizens and patriots, will they make? Can the Church of Christ thrive in the midst of such a generation? Will the bonds of social order and virtue be

kept strong? Will the sacred duties of life be discharged by them? Will not God "smite with a curse" for such things?

I have not overcolored the picture. It is impossible to do it. A change has taken place—a sad and widespread change—in reference to family training, and family religion, and the family function. There is no denying the fact. We see the evidences of it on every hand. The fruits of it are too apparent not to be noted, and of too serious a character not to excite alarm. We see its effects traced on every page of the world's history.

The decay of patriotism and public virtue; the general loosening of the bonds of social order and peace; the alarming increase of crime of every form; the betrayal of trust so common; the deterioration of the public morals; the frequency of precocious depravity; the little reverence and respect paid to age and parental authority; the extent to which political and social heresies have become rooted in public sentiment; and the horrible festering corruption which exists in the social life of the age—blighting so much that is fair and good, and sapping the very foundations of moral virtue—all this, and much beside, may be charged to the change I have named. It is the natural consequence of a perversion of God's primal Institute for the training of mankind, and for the redemption of the race.

This change has not come over us *suddenly*. It has grown upon us by degrees, and imperceptibly. But it is none the less real and great. A single generation has made its mark. If our fathers and mothers were to revisit the earth, they would, in a multitude of cases, be shocked by the change which has taken place around the old hearth-stone since their day. They would find that the old family Bible; the morning and evening hymn and prayer; the catechism and religious instruction; parental love and filial reverence; the flow and mingling of sentiment and sympathy in the home circle, and the exercises of wholesome authority and restraint, do not fill that place in the Family now which they did in their day. And this defection is not confined to worldly and irreligious families. The households of the professedly pious, to an alarming extent, show the same change. The claims of business, and of society have become so numerous and so urgent, that but little time and strength is left for home duties. And so much of the spirit, and maxims, and life of society, has crept into the families of the righteous, as to destroy, in a measure at least, the tone of home feeling, lessen the anxiety of parents for the souls of their children and domestics, and interfere greatly with their spiritual instruction, and the influence of the parental relation. How the morning prayer is dispatched, or omitted altogether! the world presses so. How dull and languid is it at evening! so exhausting and engrossing have been

the labors and excitements of the day; or deferred to too late an hour for the children to be profited by it. How few of the evenings of the week can be spared from company, or business, or the club, or popular lecture, or the social meeting, and devoted to the Family, its improvement and enjoyment. And when can be found, nowadays, even on the Sabbath, with its three services, and its Sabbath-school and other calls, to sit down with our children and enforce the lessons of God's Word upon their hearts, and teach and explain to them the catechism, which contains in a simple form so excellent a summary of Christian doctrine, and give them line upon line, and precept upon precept? The truth is, we have committed an error in this matter. Far too much of our time and effort has been diverted away from the Family. The Church and the State have suffered by our neglect of the primary education which the Family alone can secure. Parents have been too ready to lay off the responsibility which God has laid upon them; and vacate or make subordinate the post at which he has put them, and which he has made first and chief for the discipline and salvation of the race.

There can be no doubt that the Sabbath-school institution—wise as it is in conception, and benign in its effects—is, to a considerable extent, abused and perverted. It is made, far too much, to take the place of the parent. It is used to ease the conscience, and quiet the fear of many a pious father and mother. Instead of regarding it as an auxiliary only of the family, it is made chief. Instead of using it as a help in the great work of rearing their children for God, it turns them over to it; commits their religious training almost entirely to it; and satisfies conscience by sending them regularly to it. It is to be feared that there are tens of thousands of the children of pious families, the baptized children of the Church, who are receiving very little personal religious instruction and training, except what they receive in the Sabbath-school. The Sabbath-school system is not responsible for such a result, no more than any other good thing is responsible for the abuse of it. The design of it is a noble and a Christian one, and one in harmony with the Family arrangement. It was meant to supply, as far as possible, the place of a Christian parent to the ignorant, neglected, and destitute children of the land—those having no parents or guardians to care for them, or at least no Christian home—to bring such under religious instruction; to become morally responsible for them to the church and to society, and by the persuasives of piety win them to Christ. It was never meant to interfere with parental training; to lessen the anxiety and faithfulness of Christian fathers and mothers, and heads of households, in behalf of those entrusted to them; or in any way to supersede God's own wise appointment. So far as it does this, it is an evil, and an evil of a most serious

character. And if suffered to go on, the most injurious consequences may follow. There is danger to the Church, and danger to society, arising from the abuse of this agency. The Sabbath-school has grown to be a tremendous power in the land, and properly guarded and used, it is capable of doing a great work for the kingdom of God, and for human society. It has done such a work already. It has filled the place of a Christian parent to tens of thousands of ignorant and neglected children. It is to-day teaching the Word of life to unnumbered thousands who would never have come under Gospel influence but for it, and who are receiving from it all the religious training that they ever get. We welcome it as a powerful auxiliary in the work of reforming and evangelizing the world. It is doing more to restrain vice and irreligion; to promote public order and virtue, to elevate and Christianize the mass of ignorant and neglected mind in our great cities, to convert souls and strengthen the Church—than any other agency not directly ordained of God. And yet it needs to be guarded from abuse. The more valuable and effective it is, the more jealous we should be of it, lest it deteriorate in its aims and spirit, or come to lose its missionary character, and made to supersede instead of supplement the Family institution, as the means of raising up a righteous seed unto God. There would be less danger in the case, if human nature were not so willing to excuse itself from duty; so prone to shirk responsibility. It is so convenient, and such a relief to have the Sabbath-school take our children under its watch and care, and teach them the word of God, and answer for their souls. But it will not do to depend on this, nor on any other agency, to train and save our children, so long as we fail to discharge the duties of Christian parents to them. If the effect of this agency be to turn away "the heart of the fathers from their children, and the heart of the children from their fathers," it will prove a curse and not a blessing.

God enforces the instruction of the text with a solemn warning: "Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." The sin to be punished is the neglect of Family duty. Parental failure, and filial failure, is so great an evil, and so heinous a sin, in the sight of God, that he can not overlook it, but will visit the earth with a curse in punishment of it. and in vindication of his own institution. The father little reflects, when he fails to honer God as the head of his household; when he restrains prayer, and neglects to instruct his children, and leaves them to grow up in irreligton, with natures unsubdued, and in habits of idleness, dissipation and disobedience—that he is not only laying up in store bitterness for himself, and ruin for his children, but that he is also provoking the curse of God on the land. And the child who grows up destitute of natural affection, and disobedient to parental authority, who

sets at naught the lessons and restraints of a godly home, and goes into society with ungoverned passions, and evil principles —he little reflects what an injury he is inflicting on human happiness; how an indignant God looks upon such a son, and such a daughter; and how intimate are the relations of such an example, and such conduct to the corruption of society and the retributions of Heaven. God is jealous of his own institutions; and he will not see them dishonored and sinned against with impunity. And the Family constitution is of so radical a nature; it so underlies the entire fabric of human society, and is so essential to the prosperity, and the very existence of the Church, that to pollute or weaken it, is to endanger all that is dear to man, both in this world and the next.

Surely it is time to heed the warning when the curse of Almighty God is *already* smiting the land. There are deeper causes than slavery, and political heresies, and antagonistic interests and civilizations, which have brought this mighty calamity upon us. God is one of the parties in this controversy. And could we see the whole matter as he sees it; could we trace the curse back to the sin which caused it, we should find that no small part of it lay at the door of the Family. Parents have sinned against the children, by neglecting their moral and spiritual culture; and children have sinned against their parents by rebelling against wholesome restraint and discipline, and casting away the lessons of home life, and rushing into society wholly unfit for its duties. The sacred Institute which God planted before the Fall, and which touches human nature in every vital point, has had dishonor put upon it, and its Divine author is resenting it. We have suffered worldliness, and irreligion, and vice, and profanity, and vanity, and pride, to come up into the household, and pollute the very sanctuary of virtue, and poison the very fountain of life. The family altar, oh, in how many households has it been cast down! How dimly has burned the lamp of piety, for years past, in the dwellings of the godly even? How thorns and thistles have overrun the home field, while we have been concerned about other interests, and busy here and there!

Oh! in this day of Divine rebuke, when God is correcting us for our sins; when all that is dear and sacred seems imperiled, and when nothing but reformation, prompt, sincere, and thorough, can save us, let "the heart of the fathers," first of all, "be turned to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Our rulers, our statesmen, our armies, can never work out salvation for us. Our deliverance and enlargement, if it ever come, must come chiefly through the Family institute. We must begin with the young, and educate and raise up another and better generation. The work of rebuilding, what suicidal hands have torn down, and what the tides of irreligion, and worldliness, and corruption have worn away, must

begin with the Family. Here all thorough and abiding reformations must always begin. This radical foundation God laid in Eden, and laid again after the flood, and laid afresh in the family of Abraham. On this foundation all the prophets stood, and by virtue of it Christ was born into the world, and separated for his work. Let us hallow the Family institution. Let us rise up and build every one over against his own wall. Let us seek devoutly to make the Family a type of heaven; a perennial fountain of holy influences; a power in the earth, to restrain depravity, and build up the kingdom of God.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

For The Prayer Meeting.

Bread cast upon the Waters.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days."—ECCLESIASTES, 11: 1.

YEARS ago it fell to my lot to minister the last sad offices of love and duty to a dying saint. She was the wife of a country pastor, the center of many fond hopes and loves—a young mother, who, in the bloom of early womanhood, had received her summons to depart. She was not terrified, for years before she had renounced the pomps and vanities of this world, of which she was naturally fond, and found peace and life in Jesus. And now, during many weary months of decay and suffering, she had been watching and waiting for the unseen messenger. All was serenity and joy in her soul. The work of personal preparation was all done. The struggle of parting with life and the world, with husband and children, with an affectionate people and a large circle of loved friends was ended. But there was one burden yet on her heart—one work still to be accomplished. That burden pressed heavy, and cast the only shadow that fell on her happy soul. And summoning all her strength, she was enabled to lift off that last burden, and do her last work.

She had a father whom she dearly loved, and who doated on and was proud of his daughter. But he was an ungodly man. If not an infidel, he had little regard for religion. He was all-engrossed in the world, and there seemed little if any hope for him. The prayers and example of her mother (now dead) were lost upon him; child after child had been torn from him, but his proud heart seemed to grow more stubborn; gray hairs preached to him, but he was deaf to all appeals, and was a man that could not be approached by the ministers of religion; and during her sickness she had often entreated him to make the journey and see his dying child once more. But in this she was disappointed. He was afraid of death; afraid of his own dying child!

It was a wide waste of waters, but that emaciated and trembling hand cast the bread of faith upon it, and heaven saw and rewarded the act.

With her own hand she wrote a long, affectionate, and faithful farewell letter to her father. The effort cost her great suffering of mind and body. Bolstered up in bed, with tearful eyes and a teembling hand, she, day by day, as her strength would allow, went on with her work till it was finished, and then the burden was felt no more; she had nothing to live for longer. The peace of heaven filled and overflowed her soul, she had laid her head upon the pillow and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

But that farewell letter! Of its contents I will not write. It was such a letter as an affectionate, pious, dying child would naturally write to an irreligious, worldly, and aged father, whom she should not see again till the judgment day, and who had hitherto withstood all appeals, and hardened his neck under the severest chastisements. The letter was signed and sealed in her presence, to be forwarded as soon as she was dead. This was done, and the mail carried it safely to the bereaved father. What impression it made on his mind at the time is not known; but it had no effect on his outward life. The solemn and deeply affecting farewell appeal of his child was unheeded amid the cares of business and the pursuits of the world. The letter was read and put away from sight in his desk among other letters and papers of little or no interest. The faith of God's dear dying child seemed to be void. The bread had been upon the waters a long while, and there were no signs of good to come from it. It seemed to all who knew him that that hard

ened and aged sinner would die as he had lived; but hold! A thousand years with the Lord are but as a day. There is yet one unseen tie holding that sinner within reach of mercy. The promise is sure.

Years wear away. Twelve summers have fled since the hand that feebly traced that letter mouldered to dust; and during all these years that father continued his course of ungodliness and all-engrossing worldliness. But, suddenly, the hand of disease is laid upon him. Wearisome days and nights are appointed unto him; his strength gradually fails him; he begins to feel that his days are numbered. Confined to his room, he at length endeavors to arrange his worldly matters with reference to the fearful change which he saw was inevitable and nigh. In examining some papers one day, he drew out the long-forgotten farewell letter, which a beloved child's love had dictated, and a dying saint's prayers and tears had embalmed. With a trembling hand he takes it, and with a bursting heart he reads it, every word of it. The Spirit of God had dictated that epistle, love inspired it, Providence had brought it safely from the West to the banks of the Hudson, and deposited it securely in his desk till now, and the hour has come for it to do its work. Oh! that letter! it is as one sent from the dead to warn him. The image of his loved lost one is before him, bathed in tears, silently beseeching him to make his peace with God. There comes a voice from that letter, so familiar and so loving, that he can not but listen, and, at the same time, so solemn and so in earnest, that he is startled and made to tremble. Death is preaching to him now, and conscience is preaching as never before. The promise of God is being verified: "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days." That bread which a child, twelve years gone by, had cast forth from her death-bed, now brought life and peace to her father's soul. Alone in this chamber, with only that letter to admonish and entreat, after all other means and instrumentalities had failed, that aged father prostrated himself before God and opened his heart to religious truth, and gave evidence before his death that he had found forgiving mercy. J. M. S.

Be Faithful.

A MERCHANT and ship owner of New York was standing at the entrance of his warehouse, conversing with a gentleman on business. A pious sailor, belonging to one of his vessels, came to the warehouse to enter it, but, observing that the door was occupied, immediately stepped aside, not willing to interrupt the conversation.

While waiting there he heard the name of Jesus profanely used, and, on turning to look, he observed that it was his employer who was speaking. Instantly changing his position, and standing in front of the gentlemen with his head uncovered and his hat under his arm, he addressed the merchant in this language.

"Sir, will you excuse me if I speak a word to you?"

The gentleman, recognizing him as one of the crew of his vessel recently arrived, and, supposing he might have something to say about the business of his ship, told him to speak on.

"You won't be offended, then, sir, with a poor, ignorant sailor, if he tells you his feelings?" said he.

"Certainly not," replied the merchant.

"Well, then, sir," said the honest hearted sailor, with much feeling, "will you be so kind as not to take the name of my blessed Jesus in vain? He is a good Saviour! He took my feet out of 'the horrible pit and miry clay, and established my goings,' O sir! don't, if you please, take the name of my Master, the Lord Jesus, in vain! He is your Creator as well as mine, and He has made you, and preserves you, and is always doing you good."

This was said with so much earnestness and feeling, that the gentleman was quite touched. His eyes filled with tears, and he said:

"My good fellow, God helping me, I will never again take the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour, in vain."

"Thank you, sir," said the honest tar; and putting on his hat, he went away to his work.—*Presbyterian Almanac.*

Convictions by the Holy Spirit.

THERE is a touching and tender warning to those who are careless in their sins, especially to those who have been awakened to the great concerns of the soul, in such incidents as the following. There are, doubtless, many more similar cases, which are never recorded, save in the book of God's remembrance.

Some years ago, a young man in a neighboring State, was deeply convicted of his sins. He was in great agony of mind for many days, spent much time in his closet with his Bible, and made frequent visits to his pastor for counsel. His feelings were more pungent than usual, and at last seemed on the point of accepting the Saviour as the only way of pardon. His pastor hoped that at the next interview he might find him a rejoicing believer.

But at the next visit he seemed less interested than before, and the pastor soon found that a wicked companion was trying to draw him back again to worldly pleasures. He warned him of the great peril of trifling with the Spirit's influences, and besought him to make an instant surrender to Christ. The young man was deeply affected, but after leaving his pastor fell in again with his companion, and lacking moral courage to be true to himself, joined with him in ridiculing some of the peculiar features of the revival. From that time his seriousness disappeared. He forsook the sanctuary, became a profane and reckless man, a notorious opposer of the truth, and, in a few years, was taken away by a sudden and fearful death, without a moment's warning, to prepare to meet God.

Rest in Christ.

SOUL-TROUBLES are spending, wasting troubles; the pains of a distressed conscience are the most acute pains. A poor soul would fain be at rest, but knows not where; he tries this duty and that, but finds none. At last, in a way of believing, he casts himself with his burthen of guilt and fear upon Christ, and there is the rest his soul desired. Christ and rest come together. Till faith bring you to the bosom of Jesus, you can find no true rest. The soul is rolling and tossing, sick and weary upon the billows of its own guilt and fears. Now the soul is come like a ship tossed with storms and tempests, out of a raging ocean into the quiet harbor; or like a lost sheep that hath been wandering in weariness, hunger, and danger, into the fold. Is a soft bed in a quiet chamber sweet to one that is spent and tired with travel? Is the sight of a shore sweet to the shipwrecked mariner that looks for nothing but death? Much more sweet is Christ to a soul that comes to him pressed in conscience and broken in spirit, under the sinking weight of sin. How did the Italians rejoice after a long and dangerous voyage to see Italy again—crying, with loud and united voices, (which made the very heavens ring again,) "Italy! Italy!" But no shore is so sweet to the weather-beaten passenger as Christ is to a broken-hearted sinner. This brings the soul to a sweet repose.—*Flavel.*

Prayer-Meeting Thermometer.

THE common use of a thermometer is well known to all to measure the degree of heat, the temperature of the atmosphere, of any thing else in which it is placed. So there is a spiritual thermometer which shows the warmth of the prayer-meeting and the state of the atmosphere in a church. In the Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting, for illustration, no one can well doubt the state of the spiritual atmosphere who attends the daily meetings. The warmth, the glow of deep feeling, the earnest prayers, the tender and touching appeals, the facts related in answer to prayer, the tearful eye, and sometimes the sob from some bursting heart, indicate the spiritual atmosphere and the presence of the Holy Spirit. The contrast between such a scene and such an atmosphere and that of a cold and luke-

warm church is great.

When the church is warm it shows it; and when it is cold it just as unmistakably indicates it; and all the way up and down the scale we may there read its condition. All that it is necessary to do to learn the true state of things in this respect is to consult the thermometer. But there is a striking analogy here between natural and spiritual things. And where the atmosphere in a church is cold, means should be at once taken to remedy this sad state of things. Let each member go and take a live coal from off the altar of prayer, and come together in the prayer-meeting, and while they are musing the fire will burn, and the Spirit will come down, and souls will be converted unto God.

I will be Serious.

FACTS, incidents, anecdotes, in the lives of men, embodying important truths, have a language of their own, and seem to speak to survivors long afterward.

Mr. Simeon, a good and holy man, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, eminent in his ministerial labors in England for many years, used to keep a picture of Henry Martyn in his room, and every time he looked at it, as he said, "It seemed to say, 'Be serious, Simeon, be serious,'" and the good man would make it a little bow, and say: "I will be serious, Henry, I will be serious." Ah! it would be well for us all to keep a Henry Martyn before us, or better still, Henry Martyn's Master. It is only by constant prayer that we shall be enabled to "lay aside every weight," and to run well "the race set before us."

Contrast between Christ's Humiliation and His Exaltation.

"IT is far otherwise with him now than it was in the days of his humiliation here on earth. It were good to compare in our thoughts the abasement of Christ and his exaltation together. He was born in a stable, but now he reigns in his royal palace. Then he had a manger for his cradle, but now he sits on a chair of state. Then oxen and asses were his companions, now thousands of saints, and tens of thousands of angels, minister about his throne. Then in contempt they called him the carpenter's son, now he obtains a more excellent name than angels. Then he was led away into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, now it is proclaimed before him: 'Let all the angels of God worship him.' Then he had not a place to lay his head on, now he is exalted to be heir of all things. In his state of humiliation, he endured contradiction of sinners; in his state of exaltation he is adored and admired by saints and angels. Then he had no form or comeliness; now the beauty of his countenance shall send forth such glorious beams as shall dazzle the eyes of all the celestial inhabitants round about him."

Genuine Christian Love.

LET him that hath ingenuity plan, and him that hath strength labor, and him that hath money give, and him that hath none of these, as well as him that hath all of them, bow the knee, and with the faith of Abraham and the fervor of Elijah, pray that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ to believe our neighbor immortal, and yet in our love to regard and treat him only as a mortal; to know he has a soul, and yet to feel no concern and take no care of his soul; to feed him with the bread that perisheth, and yet never offer his famishing spirit a morsel of the bread of heaven; to find him fainting with thirst, and yet give him none of the waters of life; to help him along through this brief world, and yet never seek to throw one kindly influence upon his immortal course, can not be to love our neighbor as God intended we should.

Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."
—Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."
—Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON III.

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THE MAN OF SORROWS.

"A MAN of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."—ISAIAH 53 : 3.

THE entire prophecy commencing in the preceding chapter, and extending through the whole of this, from which the text is taken, is a description of the character, sufferings, and atoning work of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Although written ages before his coming, it seems now, after his mission has been accomplished, more like a history than a prediction, so minute and definite is it in all its various particulars; indeed, we may say with strict propriety, that by its fulfillment in every point, it has actually become a portion of the true history of the great Redeemer of the world. It describes him as he was, when, having been made flesh, he dwelt among us; and in respect to the particular statement in the text, his whole life is one affecting illustration of the truth that he *was* a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

We are instructed in the New Testament, for the sake of various practical benefits to be derived, to place habitually before us, and

to regard with serious consideration, the personal character and circumstances of our blessed Lord while he dwelt in humanity below. "Looking unto Jesus," says an Apostle. "He hath left us an example," is the language of another. We are to find instruction, admonition, encouragement, and comfort in his life, even as we trust for pardon and peace with God, through his death on the cross, as the bleeding Lamb; and as the saving efficacy of his dying love is infinite, so the lessons of pure wisdom which his life affords are too rich ever to be exhausted. We may find some new instruction as often as we have some new necessity.

And, my hearers, have we not all of us more or less occasion to contemplate the touching fact in relation to our Lord, which the prophet states with such tenderness and beauty in the words that have been quoted? We, too, live in an evil world. The malignant influence of sin, as we are often and painfully reminded, has planted thorns and briers all along the path which we are treading. "Though a man live many years," says Solomon, "and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many!" It is wise to remember them, beyond a doubt; not to oppress our spirits with apprehension, and so unnecessarily to darken the brightness of our better days, but to acquire just views of the proper ends of life, and to prepare ourselves to bear adversity when it shall come. Let not, then, such of us as feel no weight upon our hearts to-day, and no tears upon our cheeks, withhold our thoughts from the contemplation of Christ as the Man of Sorrows. Let not the happiest of us all who are met in the house of God give place to the impression that such a theme is without interest or appropriateness to him. Grave though the topic be, it may, it should, be rich in profit to us all.

I. You will observe, then, that the language of the text does not describe the case of one who encountered only the ordinary or the average amount of the trials which belong to human life. There is implied in it a preëminence in sorrow, a peculiarly deep experience of grief. Nothing short of this will justify the singular strength of the phraseology, as though there was nothing else but grief and sorrows on the records of his daily history. We are but very imperfectly acquainted with the incidents of our Saviour's life. It is only a brief sketch which the sacred writers furnish us; a mere outline of those things which were more immediately connected with his official character and work; and if it is true of men in general that "every heart knoweth its own bitterness," it was especially true of Him on whom were laid the iniquities of us all, that he had causes of anguish which are wholly beyond our comprehension, because wholly unlike any thing in our own experience. Still, there are few of the usual trials which are incident to human life to which we have not ample evidence that he was

subject. Poverty is accounted to have its many hardships; but he was born in the humblest condition, of parents who obtained their daily bread by manual labor; and during his earlier years he probably himself wrought as a carpenter with his reputed father for a livelihood. It is a calamity to have bitter enemies, and to live in peril, or to be obliged to fly from place to place for safety. But he was marked for death in his very infancy, and escaped the sword of Herod only by exile from his native land. What is more grateful to a kind and loving nature than the confidence and affection of one's kindred, or more mortifying and cutting to the heart than the alienation of those who, as our own blood, would naturally be disposed to love us, and will, of course, be believed by others to know us best? But his brethren not only refused to believe in him, they taunted him with ungenerous and irritating speeches. There are few things more painful than to be assailed with misrepresentation and with calumny; to have one's best actions ascribed to the worst motives, and the most purely benevolent and self-sacrificing purposes charged to the account of a wicked and deliberate selfishness. But Christ was charged with being in league with Satan, and accused of seeking, in the spirit of a demagogue, to elevate himself by the political disturbance of the nation, and was loaded with every species of abuse and slander. Who has a harder lot than he who is homeless, and as a wanderer, subsists on the offerings of charity? But the Son of Man had not where to lay his head. Ingratitude in those on whom we have conferred great benefits, and waywardness and obstinacy in opposition to our endeavors to enlighten and improve, are among the sorest trials which a benevolent heart can feel; but in respect to Jesus, gratitude in return for favors was the exception and not the rule; he had continual occasion to inquire, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? and every day was he grieved by the hardness of men's hearts. The tender nature of the Redeemer was especially fitted to delight in friendship, and it appears that in fact his attachments were very deep and ardent; but doubtless he, as well as others, often, and in cases not recorded, suffered the sundering of the ties of warm affection. At the grave of his friend Lazarus we find him weeping, and we know that his heart was also stung by the treachery of those who had professed devotion to his person and his interests; and then let it be considered how often his compassionate heart must have ached, in the tenderness of his quick sympathy with all the children of affliction, particularly as such multitudes continuully thronged him to obtain relief. Let it be imagined how he felt when he stood on the Mount of Olives, and looking over the highly favored but ungrateful city, the days of its dreadful ruin passed before his prophetic vision, and bursting into a flood of tears, he gave utterance to the affecting lamentation which the sacred writers have recorded. Let the mind follow him

step by step, in short, through all the various and aggravated sufferings with which the closing days of his life were crowded; let it contemplate the agony and bloody sweat, the brutal violence, the shame and mockery, the crown of thorns, and the barbarous scourgings, the bearing of the cross till nature sunk, and the stupendous scene of the crucifixion. Bring all these things before you in calm and deliberate review, and you will see through what sad varieties and what singularly intense degrees of suffering the mortal path of the blessed Jesus led; you will see that he stands so preëminent in his endurance that he may literally, and with an affecting fitness, be called the Man of Sorrows.

II. It is then to be noticed, in the next place, that of all the many griefs of the divine Redeemer in his human life, there was not one which he himself either needed or deserved to bear. He had no need of suffering, for he was not wanting in any of those moral virtues which it is the tendency of the discipline of suffering to produce or to improve. Affliction tends to check the ardor of excessive devotion to the world; but in him there was no spirit of worldliness that needed checking. Affliction tends to subdue the pride and self-will of the soul, and to beget a humble, pliant, and submissive temper. But he was always meek and lowly in heart, always gentle, always forgetful of himself. Patience is one of the ordinary fruits of tribulation; but his bosom was habitually calm and placid, an utter stranger to fretful, restless, irritated feelings. It is often the effect of trial to drive the soul to God as the only sure and unchanging source of good, and so to minister to the production of a devout and prayerful spirit; but the man Christ Jesus breathed always the spirit of devotion, and the desert, the mountain, and the midnight stars were steady witnesses that he was a Man of prayer. When, therefore, the Apostle tells us that he was made perfect through suffering, the meaning is that he was by this means made officially perfect as a Saviour, as the Captain of salvation, and the High-Priest of his redeemed, and not that he lacked any moral excellence, to acquire which suffering was needful. So again, when it is said that he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, the meaning obviously is, that by putting himself in a state of humiliation, and in the condition of a servant under law, he came to know by experience what it was to render obedience to the law, and not at all that he was ever defective in the least, as to the spirit of obedience to the Father's will.

Neither, again, did the Lord Jesus deserve even the least of all the sorrows he endured. As he had no need of any improvement of his virtues, he had no faults, no sins, which called for chastisement. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. He was holy, harmless, and undefiled. So clear was this, that he could even challenge his enemies to bring any well-grounded charge

against him. "Which of you," he could say, "convinceth or rather convicteth me of sin?" Yes, he suffered, being innocent, perfectly spotless in his character, without the smallest personal ill-desert, without the smallest reason in himself why he should be put to grief. At every step of that mournful path, that path so sown with sorrows and with tears, which it was given him to tread, he could pause and say with absolute and unquestionable truth: "It is not for my good that these pangs must be endured; it is not for any demerit of my own that this sore anguish is inflicted!" In this respect as well as others the Man of Sorrows stands alone. His is a case without a parallel in all the records of humanity.

III. It is also to be added, in the third place, that all the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, so painful, and so entirely unnecessary and undeserved on his own account, were endured with unwavering fortitude. We do not mean by this to say that they were met with stoical indifference, nor to deny that they were even keenly felt. The very opposite we believe to have been true, beyond all doubt. It is perfectly plain from what we know of Christ, that he had the clearest perception of what was right in general, and of what was due to himself in particular from those who were about him; and of course that he must have had the nicest sense of injustice and injury. It is manifest that he had that tenderness of heart which is a peculiar attribute of generous natures; and the general quickness of susceptibility and liveliness of affection which, while they are essential to the highest cast of character, necessarily constitute also the highest capacity for suffering. It is certainly an error, and we fear a common one, to entertain a vague impression that the human nature of the man Christ Jesus was, by its union with the divine, in some way, or in some degree, rendered less capable of feeling human sorrows than others of mankind. The Scriptures give not the smallest countenance to any such opinion, but make quite a contrary representation of the case; declaring that it behooved him to be made in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest; and that having himself suffered in his day of trial, he might be able to succor those who should be tried. All the facts of his personal history, to which we have already particularly referred, go to establish the position that he did feel as exquisitely the trials and the griefs through which he passed as any other human being could have felt the same.

And yet he never faltered. He was to the last moment of his life a willing sufferer. He was moved, deeply moved by sorrow; and he wept—wept often, it is probable. Tears are the innocent, and many times the sweet relief of the distressed. He dreaded suffering, too, like others, when he saw its near approach, and felt the instinctive desire to be saved from its bitter pangs; but not-

withstanding this, his fortitude was steady and unyielding; so that he met the hour of anguish, at all times, with a noble constancy of soul. When human nature, almost overborne by the weight of anguish, prompted the petition, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," the unbending strength of moral purpose, the enduring energy of perfect self-devotion, at once dictated the addition: "Father, thy will be done." He cordially acquiesced, in every instance in which the cup of sorrow was put into his hands. He was brought, says the prophet, as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so opened he not his mouth. Neither the rejection of his claims, nor personal insult and contempt, nor the false-heartedness of friends, nor cruel accusations, nor buffeting and spitting — no, nor the crown of thorns, nor the intolerable agonies of lingering death upon the cross, could ever draw from him a single murmur, or shake the steadiness of his uncomplaining fortitude. Even his mournful exclamation under the hidings of the Father's face, in the last affecting scene of Calvary, is no exception to the truth of these remarks; for that was only a testimony to the world of the extremity of anguish which its Redeemer consented to endure, and not at all the utterance of faltering or failing resolution.

IV. And this brings us, in the fourth place, to observe that in all the griefs and sorrows which the blessed Saviour suffered, his mind was chiefly occupied with the good results in which his sufferings were to issue. We have said that he suffered not for his own sake; but he did not therefore suffer to no purpose. He deliberately entered on his singular career of humiliation and self-sacrifice for the good of man and the glory of God. He undertook to suffer, that by what he, the sinless, should endure, the way might be opened for the pardon and restoration of the sinful, who must otherwise perish without hope. So says the prophet, in connection with the text. He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed. And by this wonderful expedient to recover a lost world, the moral perfection of the Godhead, the harmonious combination of infinite justice, love, and grace was to have a glorious illustration in the view of all the universe.

These were the ends to be attained by means of the sufferings of Jesus; and we say that he kept them continually in view. They constituted the joy set before him; and he habitually felt that it was worth the while to bear the pangs of sorrow for a season, for the sake of so great good to be achieved. It was this certainty that there should be such precious fruits from his agonies and tears, that the path to life and bliss should thus be reöpened to lost man, and that the riches of eternal love should so become

more manifest to men and angels, and more admired and celebrated through all worlds, that nerved the holy Sufferer in all his painful conflicts. For the accomplishment of so much good, he was willing, nay, it was his unalterable choice, to suffer as he did. Keen as was his sense of suffering, and much as nature must have shrunk from such woes as he endured, he was most of all concerned, that the great blessing which he came to purchase for the world might be effectually secured. For this he was content to endure the cross, and despise the shame which was heaped upon him. No doubt it was often true, that in view of this, he was enabled, in a measure, to rise above the evils which afflicted him; yea, almost to forget the pangs he felt, in thinking of the fountain of life and joy which he was thus opening to the dying millions of mankind, and of the new lustre in which the character and government of God would appear to the eyes of all, when seen in the light that was to beam from the cross on which he should expire. And thus it was, that it was not so much the trials by which he daily suffered, as it was the end for which his sufferings were endured, that engaged and absorbed his thoughts.

Such then, my hearers, are the claims of the man Christ Jesus, the divine Redeemer, to the touching title which is given him by the inspired prophet in the text; and such the manner in which he demeaned himself in the deeply interesting character which this title appropriately describes. He was, it is clear, emphatically a Man of Sorrows; and the example which, as such, he has left us, deserves at once our earnest study and our faithful imitation. We will now turn to some of the practical lessons which the whole subject naturally suggests.

1. And first, if even the Son of God, when on earth, was a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, we certainly should not think it strange that days of trial are appointed unto us. He was the Lord of Glory; yet there were good reasons, in the view of Infinite Wisdom, why he should be smitten and afflicted. We are mere creatures of yesterday, dependent creatures, sinful creatures; how much more should we suppose that good reasons may exist, why we should be subjected to affliction! Suppose we can not always see these reasons, or even imagine what they are; we can not see why it was necessary that Christ should be so great a sufferer as he was. It might have seemed to us, for example, that the anguish endured during the days of his trial and crucifixion would answer the great purpose of his mission, just as well as a whole life of painful griefs. But yet we are sure that the love which sent him to redeem the world would not permit him to endure one unnecessary pang. So in our own case. We may be ready to believe that it were better that we should be exempted from many of our trials; but we are but very poorly qualified to judge in such a matter. And when we see the holy Son of God,

in whom the Father was well pleased, subjected to such heavy woes, instead of thinking that some strange thing has happened unto us when we are bowed with the weight of sorrow, we ought plainly to admire and praise the wisdom and goodness of Almighty God that our afflictions are not more frequent and more painful than they are; that we, the sinful, have so many days and weeks of comfort intermingled with our sorrows, when Jesus, the sinless, had so few!

2. A second thought suggested is, that if our blessed Lord felt keenly what he suffered, and was even moved to tears, we need not reproach ourselves because we deeply feel our trials, and can not but weep in the fullness of our grief. There is no necessary connection between the grief of a smitten heart, even when it relieves itself in weeping, and a murmuring and unsubmissive spirit. This the example of the afflicted Saviour clearly proves. He was grieved; he wept; he even prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let the cup of anguish pass;" yet at the same moment he could calmly say: "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight: I came not to do mine own will, but His that sent me. Father, thy will be done." Your hearts, my hearers, may therefore be wrung with sorrow, and your cheeks bedewed with tears, and yet you may be submissive to God's will, and without a wish either to question his goodness, or to repine at the events of his righteous providence. It is, of course, a most important duty to look well to it, in your days of trouble, that you do feel a true submission, and that you are willing to trust God where you can not see: but with an acquiescing, trusting spirit—a spirit whose genuine utterance would be: I was dumb; I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it. Feel tenderly, if you will; weep freely, if it lightens the pressure on your heart; you have for this the warrant of the highest of all examples!

3. A third thought claims our notice. If Christ was a willing sufferer, deliberately choosing to suffer for the good of others, we surely should consent to suffer for our own advantage. We do not say that afflictions in themselves are at all desirable. The cup of sorrow is a bitter cup. But the Scriptures plainly tell us, that the chastenings which God sends are intended for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. There are benefits to be derived from trials, which are of the highest value, and which we are never likely to obtain without them. We may endure the trials without reaping the advantage, but only through our own neglect to use them as we ought. Rely on it, my hearers, along with every grief that is sent to you from the hand of the All-Merciful a blessing comes concealed, which you may, if you will, discover and secure. There are other things which are of greater value to us than present ease and gratification. The drawing of our hearts to God, the right moulding of our characters, and our

training for a happy immortality, are blessings cheaply purchased by any amount of present crosses or afflictions. And when you reap these fruits of suffering, remember you reap them for yourself. While, therefore, you reflect, that the Man of Sorrows exhibited such calm, unshaken fortitude, such admirable constancy of purpose, though he suffered all for the sake of others, will not you be ashamed to shrink or falter when called, in the providence of God, to suffer for your own? Oh! when you are ready to faint in the day of your adversity, let the thought of what your Redeemer meekly bore for you inspire your soul with a quiet, steady courage to bear such trials as are fitted to develop in your heart the precious fruits of virtue and of piety.

4. Lastly, if our blessed Lord and Saviour made less account of what he suffered than of the good results that were to follow, it is wise at least in us to do the same. We may dwell too much on what we suffer. We may brood over our griefs till they fill, as it were, our whole field of vision, and seem to us far greater than they really are in a sober estimate. There is nothing to comfort us in such a course, and it is every way unprofitable. It tends only to produce despondency and morbid feeling, and often indisposes us to duties which demand attention. Far better is it that we do as Jesus did. He looked away, as we have seen, from himself and what he was enduring, so far as this was possible, to the happy results in which his sorrows were to end. This, my hearers, is the true wisdom in our case. Try the experiment, and you will doubtless find it so. When the storm of sorrow is beating on your head, yield not to the disposition which you feel to dwell continually upon your lot; and to revolve over and over in your mind the greatness of your afflictions. Instead of this, let your thoughts be turned, as much as may be, to the design which God may have in permitting you to be afflicted. Let your heart be continually asking, in its silent musings: "What is the lesson which Eternal Love would teach me by this trial? What are the blessings, richer far than rubies, which I may find, and which I ought to find, by means of this anguish and these tears? In this furnace of affliction, may I not be purified and so prepared for a nobler happiness, and, at the same time, honor God by a suitable behavior?" By such a course, you will conform to your great Pattern, the divine model of all excellence and virtue; and by it you will also most effectually gather around your troubled heart the sweetly soothing influences which are fitted to assuage its anguish, and to lull its agitations to repose. If you are now a Christian, a real child of God, you may go still further in your thoughts. As the divine Redeemer was able always to look far beyond the scenes of his earthly trial to the glory which awaited him when he should reäscend to his native heaven, so you, as an heir of God, may look beyond the vale of tears through which you travel now

to those sinless, tearless, blissful realms, for which it is the object of your present discipline to fit you! You may refresh your sometimes weary spirit with the confident anticipation of that untroubled, endless rest which you are soon to find beside the peaceful waters which flow eternally from out the throne of God! This is the happy privilege of all who indeed belong to Christ.

And oh! that all of you, my hearers, may find it in your hearts to think often of the Man of Sorrows, and to study well his divine example! What a mighty debt of love you owe him, that he bore so much for you! How complete his qualification to be your tender, faithful, everlasting Friend! How consoling is the knowledge that out of his own deep experience of grief, he can sympathize with you; when bowed with anguish, you would lean upon his bosom! Yes, glorious Sufferer! now again enthroned in thine own eternal majesty, never to feel more one throb of agony! Often will we think of thee as the Man of Sorrows! And God, in his mercy, grant that, like thine, our days of weeping may terminate in the sweet, unclouded smiles of heaven! Amen.

SERMON IV.*

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THE EVILS OF WAR, AND OUR DUTY TO THOSE ENGAGED IN IT.

"WEEP not for the dead, neither bemoan him: but weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country."—JEREMIAH 22: 10.

THE words of the text were spoken with reference to Shallum, or, as he was sometimes called, Jehoahaz, and his father, Josiah, who had been King of Judah. The Jews were, in our text, commanded by God not to mourn nor weep for Josiah, who, after a life and reign of great piety and usefulness, had gone down to the grave, but they were to weep sore for his wicked and profligate son, who, for his sins, was carried away captive into Egypt and died there; not being permitted to return from thence, nor see his native coun-

* This discourse was written by request, in connection with the loss of neighbors and parishioners who had died on the battle-field, in hospitals, or among their friends, from wounds or from disease, the result of service in the army. The fact that the writer was for years a chaplain in the navy, and that his son is in active duty and command in the same service, will explain some allusions and remarks which follow.

try. And how many, alas! have there been, in all ages of the world, who have had more occasion to weep for the living than for the dead; for children, or others near and dear to them, vicious and debased, or far removed from them by sea or by land, where they might no more behold them, than for those lovely and beloved, who, near them in peaceful graves, sleep in death and rest in heaven; for the living Cain, a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, with the mark of God upon him, than for the dead Abel, blood-stained in his grave, but with the martyr's crown in heaven.

We know, too, that among the Jews there was a strong desire to sleep with their fathers within the sacred bounds of Palestine; that Jacob and Joseph, before their death, solemnly bound those around them to bury them in the Land of Promise; that the Most High, as a severe punishment, caused that wicked kings should not be buried with their fathers; and that at the present day, great numbers of aged Jews go from distant lands to Palestine, that in the ancient home of their nation they may sleep the sleep of death. It is also evident, that to one of sensitive feelings and strong affections, the thought and the near prospect of dying among strangers, where those most loved may not care for and soothe in sickness, nor visit nor weep over him when dead—this is indeed peculiarly trying to the soul; and however we may think and feel when strong and vigorous, yet when we know that soon the death-shade must darken our vision, and the cold river rise around us, then we long for our own dear homes and the friends who love us there, and with one of old we exclaim: "Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the graves of my father and of my mother."

I have chosen this subject, and thus explained it with a view to apply it to those who, as soldiers and seamen, go forth to war, and for whom, though living, there is often more occasion to mourn than for the dead, and of whom, as compared with those who have died in piety and peace, and whose graves are with those of their fathers, we may, in the words of our text, well say: "Weep not for the dead, neither bemoan him: but weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country."

And here, with a view rightly to direct our sympathies, our efforts, and our prayers in behalf of those who go forth to war, by sea or by land, let us notice some of the temptations, trials, and dangers to which they are exposed.

First and foremost of these evils are the temptations to vice which everywhere meet those who leave virtuous and quiet homes and enter the camp or the ship of war.

He who thus goes abroad may have been a child of many prayers and tears, ever taught to love and honor God, and made familiar with his Holy Word. He may, too, carry his Bible with him, solemnly promising that he would daily read it. And when the

unseen enemy with whom you can not grapple; to know that death is approaching slowly but surely; to feel that your name will occupy no place on the bright scroll of fame; thus, without any of the pride and rapture of the strife to meet bravely the inevitable tyrant, is the highest test of the soldier's courage, the strongest proof of the patriot's devotion."

Now the youth, lovely and beloved, his father's pride, the idol of a mother's, a brother's, and a sister's heart, from a sense of duty or the love of fame, goes forth to war. Far from home, disease comes on him; for in war it is commonly true that more die from sickness than in battle. Friends of his youth, his companions in arms may be with him, the man of God may pray with and comfort him, and hopes of heaven may cheer him; yet, in the crowded hospital or lowly tent, or on the rolling ocean, how, in his last hours, does he long for his far-off, quiet home, and those who love him there; and how do father and mother, brother and sister bewail him, when they learn of his sickness and fear his death. Would God that we could stand beside him, is the language of their hearts, to relieve his moaning anguish, and to close his eyes in death. And when his parents learn that he sleeps in death where they may not visit his grave nor weep over him there, how is their anguish like that of David when he cried: "O my son Absalom, my son! my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Another has reached the prime and vigor of manhood when, at the cry of liberty and union, at the call of duty and of God he goes forth to fight, and if needs be to die for that for which our fathers bled and died. Visited with sickness and drawing near to the grave, fearless he meets the king of terrors; but in his dying moments he thinks of his far-off home and wife and child; and oh! he thinks too, and deeply feels how it would comfort and relieve his heart could they but stand beside him to cheer his dying moments, and receive his farewell blessing, and could they follow him to where the grave should welcome him, there to shed the tears of pity and of love.

In view, however, of those who, as good soldiers of the Cross of Christ, have for their country's good died from sickness, from wounds, or on the battle-field, and of their friends thus sorely bereaved, well may we, as taught in our text, weep rather for the living than for the dead. In the words of an ancient Hebrew dirge we may say:

> "Mourn for the mourner, not for the dead:
> He is at rest, but we are in tears."

Or, to use the words of him already quoted: "Our tears fall fast and free; but they flow rather for the living than the dead; for the nation that has lost such worthy sons; for the desolate fire-

sides bereaved of their cherished and loved ones; for the bowed father, the heart-broken mother, the sobbing sister, the frantic wife, and the wondering children. For them we weep, but not for the heroic dead. Honor, eternal honor to the brave who baptized their patriotism in their blood." And yet, as Christians, while we mourn for and honor the fallen, we can not but feel how sad beyond all sadness it is to die in the hospital, on the battle-field, at sea, or in some foreign port, far from home and from friends, and with no bright hope of a heavenly home, and the victor's crown of glory and of life on high, or of communion there with those sainted heroes of the olden time who, as the Apostle tells us: "Through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

I would not here dwell upon the horrors of captivity, the crowded prison-cell, the scanty and unwholesome food and drink, the scornful, fiendlike taunting and abuse of bitter and malignant foes, the suffering from cold, from sickness, from almost nakedness; uncared for and unpitied, with no kind messages from those whom most they love, and if they die, to be buried with the burial of a dog. Such sufferings, and the cruelties inflicted by the enemy on our captive soldiers, and on their own neighbors who differed from them in opinion, in shooting them down like wild beasts when they came to the window-bars of their prisons to breathe the air of heaven; in hanging, as Union men, the wise and the good, aged and honored ministers of the Gospel, guilty of no crime but loving their country; from horrors such as these, we turn away with sadly sorrowing or bitterly indignant woe and anguish, feeling in our hearts and saying:

> "O judgment! thou hast fled to brutish beasts,
> And men have lost their reason."

And what shall we here say of the horrors of the battle-field? for truly has the prophet said, that: "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood." Sad indeed is it to think of those who, in vast numbers, are maimed and mangled, and bleed and die; of those who, with limbs broken or shattered or carried away, or with bodies sorely wounded, are trodden under foot by advancing and retreating hosts, or left uncared for, thirsty, faint, and weak, from burning fever or from chilling night-winds, without a drop of water to cool their parched tongues or quench their raging thirst.

Or shall we go to the crowded hospital, where deep and festering wounds are probed and shattered limbs bound up or cut off, and amid groans and tears and shrieks, men die with none to comfort or to aid, to soothe their anguish, or speak to them of God, of duty, of hope and heaven, to wipe away the clammy sweat of death,

while none of those who love them bless their dying vision, or follow them to where they rest in death?

Or shall we turn to naval battles and ships of war, where are crushing balls, and bursting shells, and shattered masts and yards, and gory decks, and mangled bodies, and shrieks of anguish, and heaps of slain; or where burning or sinking ships, or those whose magazines have exploded, give to multitudes a watery grave, or scatter their torn and mangled bodies far and wide upon the deep to sink where the seaweed should enshroud them, and the ocean's bed be their sepulcher?

Look, too, at the secret theft and the open and violent robbery, oppression, and wrong, and the wide-spread ruin and devastation which ever abound in connection with war; the petty and the wholesale and gigantic swindling and frauds of those who thus, like greedy vultures, prey upon their country in her hour of need.

Another great and sore evil connected with war is the fact, that under its reckless and impulsive violence of feeling and of action, virtue and piety are blighted, or grossly perverted and blinded as to perceiving and yielding to what is just and true on the one hand, and evil and base on the other. Listen, too, in war, to the shrieks, and behold the convulsions of outraged humanity, a prey to passion, to avarice, to lawless violence and unbridled lust, or ground to the earth by the iron heel of reckless and despotic violence and abuse. And how, too, are the hearts of nations at war fired with passion and filled with moral corruption and death as fetid and festering as that of the grave.

Nor has this desolating curse, like the waters of the deluge or the tempest of fire by which Sodom was destroyed, visited the earth but once; but, like the tides of the ocean, like the wide rolling freshets of mighty rivers, like the massive avalanches which in succession rush with desolating fury down upon the plains which bound the mountain's base, like the lava of Etna and Vesuvius, burying fertile fields and the dwellings of men far and wide around beneath its burning flood, and rising in successive layers high above its deeply buried ruins; so has war, for ages upon ages, swept over the earth, clothing it in sackcloth, and drenching it with blood, and burying beneath its far-reaching desolation, or swallowing up in its fearful vortex private worth and public virtue, personal fame and national honor, individual wealth and public resources. The sad music of its death-march has been the wail of anguish and the shriek of despair, the moaning of the heart-broken widow, and the cry of the homeless and desolate orphan. Its pathway has been strewed with the moldering corpses, and bleaching bones and crowded graves and desolate dwellings, and untilled fields of the dead. On its altar of death broken hearts have been offered, and tears of anguish have freely flowed. Desolate hearthstones have been its monuments, and its

record of woe has been written with the life-blood of its wretched victims. And thus true indeed is it, as the Roman historian has said, that by the ravages of war, "Men make a solitude, and call it peace."

Such, then, is war, cruel and relentless war, with hands of violence and eyes of flaming rage, with gory locks, and crimson banners, and martial music, and garments red with blood, like the Angel of Death moving with desolating fury abroad upon the earth. What myriads upon myriads have thus sadly perished. Wide flowing rivers have been filled with the bodies, and dyed with the blood of the slain, and the dust of the fallen has enriched the soil of a thousand battle-fields. The rejoicing of nations for victories won, is mingled with the wail of the widow, the cry of the orphan, and the heart-broken anguish of parents bereaved of their children.

It is indeed true, that in the war in which we are now engaged, much is done to enlighten, restrain, reform, and rightly guide our national defenders by means of suitable reading and moral and religious instruction. So also by needed comforts, and luxuries even, and by kind and careful nursing, the sick and the wounded have been greatly cheered and relieved, and thus have the rigors of deadly contention and strife been softened; but still it is true, and ever has been, that:

> "Where'er the blood-stained monster trod,
> Fell wide and deep the curse of God."

And how sad is it that Christians even are prone to forget that many of those opposed to them in war are Christians too, involved in strife by no wish or agency of their own, and having bitterly suffered from it, they earnestly long and fervently pray for the day when peace, union, and brotherly love shall return and prevail. And, while strongly condemning rebellion, and earnestly striving to subdue or otherwise to end it, yet should we ever guard against all personal and sectional bitterness and hatred, which God has forbidden, and which, too, would be in the way of or prevent in the future cordial and enduring peace, union, and Christian love and esteem. For those, too, who through gross misrepresentation and falsehood or other evil influences have been led bitterly to hate and revile us, we should, like our blessed Master pray: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Nor should we forget, that the peculiar and chosen representatives of Christ here on earth are the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed; for he hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him, so that whatever we do to comfort or relieve even the least of these his disciples, he will reward as if done to himself.

"In them he may be clothed and fed,
And visited and cheered,
And in their accents of distress,
The Saviour's voice is heard."

As to our duty to those who from among us have gone or may go forth to war, while we kindly yet sadly cherish the memory of those who from disease or on the battle-field have fallen or may fall, we ought to do what we can for the bodily comfort and protection of their families and of those who still survive, and to soothe and relieve them when far from us they suffer from sickness or from wounds. But, above all, we should give them such Christian counsels and warnings, should supply them with such reading, write them such letters, and so pray for them as with the blessing of God may tend most to restrain them from vice and sin, and to lead them, as good soldiers of the cross, to triumph over all their spiritual foes. Thus, should they die, we might hope that they would gain the victor's crown of life on high, or should they return to us again, or go to found a new civilization at the South, they might, as virtuous, enlightened Christian men, be a blessing to all around them, both for this life and that which is to come. The more we thus do for the spiritual good of our national defenders, the sooner may we hope for enduring national peace and prosperity, as also for that coming day of universal peace, union, and good-will among men, when as God has promised:

"No more shall nation against nation rise,
Nor ardent warriors meet with hateful eyes,
Nor fields with gleaming steel be covered o'er,
The brazen trumpets kindle rage no more;
But useless lances into scythes shall bend,
And the broad falchion in the plowshare end."

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting.

THE daily gatherings for prayer in this consecrated spot are still continued. The facts and the incidents related amply show that God is as ready to hear and answer prayer as his people are to ask him. He seems to say to all his praying ones, "Prove me herewith," and see if the blessings do not come.

Several clergymen within a week past have given accounts of what the Lord has done and is doing, in pouring out his Spirit upon their respective churches. One said that toward the close of the week of prayer he came here, and stated that they had been holding meetings daily during the week of prayer, and they were determined to continue them another week; and he requested that the meeting would especially remember his church during the coming week. He had himself resolved on the continuance of the meetings.

"Can you imagine my surprise," said the clergyman, "on going to the meeting of my own appointment, on the evening of the day that I had asked you to offer special prayer in our behalf, to find that I had not a single member of my church present, to assist in singing or prayer? Many were present, but not one professor of religion. It did not seem as if this state of things was an answer to your prayers, and yet God took this very method to break me off from all dependence upon the Fulton-street prayer-meeting, and lead me to depend on him alone. I felt that I had nowhere else to go but unto God. I told him so with a melting heart. And the Lord heard and answered my cry, and came to my help. Now I have to tell you that sinners have been converted, the children of God have been quickened, and we are now in the midst of a glorious revival of religion. I come now to ask a continuance of prayer in our behalf."

For The Prayer-Meeting.

Death-Bed Scenes.

THE last dark river runs quite near the death-bed from which man takes his last departure from this passing world. It is by a man's conduct through life we are to form our opinions of his state after death. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord;" and it is added: "their works do follow them." A dying hour is too short to make provision for a long eternity. It is true we know not what the Lord in mercy may do for an impenitent sinner upon a dying-bed; but we do know that life is the only time to prepare for death. "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;" to-morrow may be too late. However little there may be in the Bible to encourage death-bed repentance, death does indeed form one of the most important junctures in the history of every liv-

ing man. Death is the stern king of terrors to the wicked, but a messenger of peace to the righteous. Death has a thousand stings for the wicked, but the justified spirit of the righteous leaves a world of sin to bask in the pure light of heaven. Every death-bed lies on the brink of the last river—it is close to the bar of God. It is not strange, therefore, that Christians should watch over dying friends with the utmost concern. At the same time we should not take what they may say or feel, as evidence of their being prepared or unprepared. The visions of a deranged mind form no grounds of hope on the one hand, or of despair on the other. "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." Those only who walk with God can rest with Christ. How true is it, that "many who die like a lamb, if they knew their condition, would roar like a lion." The trembling saint may go weeping from earth into heaven; the self-righteous sinner go shouting into hell. Ministering angels wait upon the one; growling devils clank their chains round the other.

For The Prayer-Meeting.

Compassion in the Ministry.

One of the most striking traits in the character of our Saviour, is his compassion toward the guilty and the suffering. He beheld Jerusalem, the devoted city, and wept over it in deep and inimitable compassion. A feeling of deep compassion for sinners, or the absence of it, adds or detracts much from the power of the ministry.

A lady suffering under one of the most severe diseases which affect our nature was urged to see a practitioner of the first eminence. His opinion was all that could be desired. He saw through the case, and could afford her essential relief; but she could never be persuaded to see him a second time; she had rather languish on, beneath excruciating pain. And why? Just because he showed an utter insensibility to her sufferings.

The spirit of our ministry must be compassion—deep compassion. Can any service demand it equally with ours? Are any sufferings of an earthly life comparable to the sufferings of the soul? Can any sight be so pitiable, so deplorable, as that of a dependent creature wandering through the paths of this dark and miserable world without God, without a Saviour, and without hope? Miserable—most miserable now—engulfed in endless misery hereafter. My brethren, if you know what pity is, here is its object. You can not truly believe in his condition without commiseration. You must help him—must save him. Every thing must be done, every thing must be risked, even his good opinion and friendship, to secure his salvation. You must exhort, rebuke, persuade. Ye must be one with him, feel for him, pray for him, weep over him. Yes, weep for him! For a man to weep for himself—his own sufferings or losses—were base and unmanly; but for a man, on great occasions, to weep over the miseries of others is noble, is sublime. So David wept, so Paul wept, and so Jesus wept!

And if, my brethren, many, more or less, under our charge, remain, as too often happens, month after month, year after year, shutting their ears to the words of life, and resisting, neglecting the great salvation; be-

coming the worse, the more hardened, and the more guilty for all our instruction, prayers, and entreaties; shall we not weep for them? Can we see them, perhaps our friends, our children, with their breath in their nostrils, liable at any instant to die, heaping up wrath against the day of wrath, madly walking on the precipices of destruction, insensible to the liquid and eternal fires, which threaten to overwhelm them at once and forever, and shall we not weep for them? Ah! earth and heaven might weep at such a sight!

The Greatest Want.

No men in the world want help like them who want the Gospel. Of all distresses, want of the Gospel cries loudest for relief. A man may want liberty, and yet be happy, as Joseph was; a man may want peace, and yet be happy, as David was; a man may want plenty, and yet be full of comfort, as Micabah was; but he that wants the Gospel wants every thing that should do him good. A throne without the Gospel is but the devil's dungeon! Wealth without the Gospel is fuel for hell; advancement without the Gospel is but going high to have the greater fall.

What do men need that want the Gospel? They want Jesus Christ, for he is revealed only by the Gospel. He is all and in all, and where he is wanting there can be no good. Hunger can not truly be satisfied without manna, the bread of life, which is Jesus Christ; and what shall a hungry man do that hath no bread? Thirst can not be quenched without a living spring, which is Jesus Christ; and what shall a thirsty soul do without water? A captive, as we all are, can not be delivered without redemption, which is Jesus Christ; and what shall the prisoner do without his ransom? Fools, as we all are, can not be instructed without wisdom, which is Jesus Christ; without him we perish in our folly. All building without him is on the sand, and will surely fall. All working without him is in the fire, where it will be consumed. All riches without him have wings, and will fly away. A dungeon with Christ is a throne, and a throne without Christ is a hell. Nothing is so ill but Christ will compensate. All mercies without Christ are bitter, and every cup is sweet that is seasoned with but a drop of his blood; he is truly the love and delight of the sons of men. He is the way; men without him are Cains, murderers, and vagabonds. He is the truth; men without him are liars, like the devil, who was so of old. He is the life; men without him are dead, dead in trespasses and sins. He is the light; men without him are in darkness, and go they know not whither. He is the vine; those that are not grafted in him are withered branches, prepared for the fire. He is the rock; men not built on him are carried away with a flood. He is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the author and the ender, the founder and the finisher of our salvation; he that hath not him hath neither beginning of good, nor shall have an end of misery.

O blessed Jesus! how much better were it not to be than to be without thee — never to be born than not to die in thee. A thousand hells come short of this —eternally to want Jesus, as men do who want the Gospel. Without him the soul in the body is a

dead soul in a living sepulcher. They want all the ordinances of God, the joy of our hearts, and the comfort of our souls. O the sweetness of a Sabbath! the heavenly raptures of prayer! O the glorious communion of saints which such men are deprived of! If they knew the value of the hidden pearl, and these things were to be purchased, what would such poor souls not part with for them?

They will at last want heaven and salvation; they shall never come into the presence of God in glory, never inhabit a glorious mansion. They shall never behold Jesus Christ, but when they shall call for rocks and mountains to fall on them, and to hide them from his presence. They shall want light in utter darkness; they shall want life under the second death; want refreshment in the midst of flames; want healing under the gnawing of conscience; want grace, continuing to blaspheme; want glory in full misery; and, which is the sum of all, they shall want an end of all this; for "their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched."—Dr. John Owen.

Faith Leaping the Gulf.

The following incident illustrates the nature of faith. A father had been explaining the Scriptures to his little son, who said:

"Father, you said you would one day, when I was old enough, teach me what faith is. Am I old enough now?"

"Well, I think you are, Willie; come to me," said the father, rising from his chair.

The boy no sooner approached than his father raised him up, and placed him on the top of a double chest of drawers that stood beside the wall. The child's color went and came, and he was evidently afraid to stand upright in so unusual a situation.

"Now, Willie," said the father, placing himself at a little distance and holding out his arms, "Now, Willie, stand upright and jump into my arms."

The child's position and the father's command were alike calculated to produce alarm, and did produce it; but the father's look was calm, and kind, and serious, and the child had invited the lesson, so he had nothing for it but to turn his mind to compliance.

Raising himself somewhat at length, he made an attempt to jump, but his heart failed him, and he drew back and stood further from the edge of the drawers.

"Ah! Willie," said the father, "thou hast no faith—try again."

Willie thought a moment, and perceived the nature of his father's experiment. He came again to the edge, and this time he did make the spring; but so imperfectly, and with so divided a mind that he would have fallen but for a beam of the ceiling just above him, on which he clasped his hands and recovered himself.

His father smiled and said: "Willie, thou hast no faith yet, but that was better than the last; come, try once more."

The look of quiet love in the father's face, and his still open arms, at length assured our hero that there really was no danger; or, it may be, so much of reverence and trust in the parental smile, that he forgot the danger. Be this as it may, this third time little Willie stood bolt upright, and jumped over the dreadful gulf into his father's powerful arms. He looked up with a smile, and his father setting him on the floor, said:

"There, Willie, that was faith. There is a gulf of hell between you and eternal life, but your heavenly Father holds out for you the arms of his love, and sent his only Son to die and prove it to you. Trust him as you have trusted me, and you will save your soul."

Having no Hope!

A COMPREHENSIVE and emphatic description of ungodly men. To what multitudes does it apply? And how fearfully appalling is such a state! "Having no hope"—what words to apply to an immortal creature of God! No hope for this life, no hope for the life to come. No hope living, none for the hour of death, none for the day of judgment. An infinite, eternal future before you, and yet in all that measureless duration of being, no sign of life, no ray of light, no blessed experience; an eternal existence before you, and yet nothing in all the past, and nothing in all the future, to sweeten and bless it to you. Oh! is this your state, my dear friend? the state of a moral, accountable, blood-bought creature of God—a creature with such capacity for enjoyment, such longings after happiness, with such a past of privilege and opportunity to look back upon, and so bright an eternity unvailed to your view in the Gospel? "Condemned already"—"having no hope"—"without God in the world"—oh! how these fearful words thrill the soul with horror! They are the knell of that state of fixed and eternal despair to which inpenitent and unpardonable sin leads a man. And yet you can be thoughtless and gay and unconcerned. Yes, you can cry peace, peace, and indulge the pleasures of sin and the world, when you have only to look forward a little to see written on the door of your death-chamber, and on the stone which marks the place of your sleeping dust, and on the heavens over you, and on the throne of the living God, and on the bar of judgment: *No hope—no hope!*

J. M. S.

The Casket of Promises.

WHEN a pious old slave on a Virginia plantation was asked why he was always so sunny-hearted and cheerful under his hard lot, he replied:

"Ah! massa, I always lays flat down on de promises, and den I pray straight up to my heavenly Father."

The solvency of a bank or of a government gives the value to its notes. So it is the everlasting faithfulness of God that makes a Bible promise "exceeding great and precious." Human promises are often worthless. Many a broken promise has left a broken heart. But since the world was made God has never broken a single promise made to one of his trusting children. He is not a man that he should lie. When God promises pardon to a believing penitent here, and glory hereafter, he does it in the full view of all the risks that we can possibly encounter. When he promises to take care of his children, he knows perfectly well how much it will cost him to maintain so vast and necessitous a family.

Men often repent of their promises. In haste they make them, to repent at leisure. In the glow of to-day's love, or in the flush of to-day's strength, they pass their word, which becomes worthless as rags when the love has cooled, or

the ability has run to water. But who ever heard of God repenting of a promise? Every one of them is "Yea in Christ and amen in him to the glory of God."—*Evangelist.*

A Rusty Christian.

An exchange says truly: "A rusty Christian—he may be on the outward appearance from circumstances—for want of the means of grace, society of Christians, and, when brought under proper treatment, may be started; but the safe, sure, and comfortable way is to continue on in the way and use of means — constancy in prayer, studying the Bible, keeping up household worship, private prayer, with devotion to every Christian duty. This may seem laborious, confining, but it will go easy, and the burden will be light. It is only a rusty Christian who can't be moved to gospel duty; while it is a burden to him, it is in great danger of destroying him. Are you in this condition? Get the file, the hammer, the oil. Rest not until you find it easy to take hold of the Bible and read, until you find the throne of grace the place where you must go, to which you will go with a ready mind and will; the work and service of God—that in which you find your heart and hand ever ready.

The History of Thousands.

Thousands of men breathe, move, and live—pass off the stage of life — are heard of no more. Why? They do not do a particle of good in the world, and none were blessed by them as the instrument of their redemption; not a word they spoke could be recalled, and so they perished; their light went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than the insects of yesterday. Will you thus live and die, O man immortal? Live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness and love and mercy on the hearts of thousands you may come in contact with year by year. You will never be forgotten. No! your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind as the stars on the brow of the evening. Good deeds will shine as the stars of heaven.—Chalmers.

Quiet Virtues.

It is the bubbling spring which flows gently, the little rivulet, which runs along day and night by the farm-house, that is useful, rather than the swollen flood or warring cataract. Niagara excites our wonder, and we stand amazed at the power, the greatness of God there, as he "pours it from the hollow of his hand." But one Niagara is enough for the continent or the world; while the same world requires thousands and tens of thousands of silver fountains and gently flowing rivulets, that water every farm and meadow, and every garden, and that shall flow on every day and night, with their quiet, gentle beauty. So with the acts of our lives. It is not by great deeds, like those of the martyrs, that good is to be done; it is by the daily, quiet virtues of life, the Christian temper, the good qualities of relatives and friends, and all, that good is to be done.

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SERMON V.

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DARIUS AND DANIEL; OR THE NECESSITY OF AN ATONEMENT.

"THE king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him."—DANIEL vi. 14.

WHEN Daniel was a young man he was carried into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. By a series of remarkable providences he was here raised from obscurity, and brought into great favor with the proud monarchs of Babylon. He was a ruler and governor under Nebuchadnezzar and his successors; and when Babylon was taken by Darius the Mede, he found Daniel clothed in scarlet, with a chain of gold about his neck, and occupying the place of the third ruler in the kingdom. Nor did the Median conquest diminish at all the popularity of Daniel, or obstruct his promotion. For Darius, we are told, "preferred him above his presidents and princes, and thought to set him over the whole realm." This high elevation excited the envy of the presidents and princes, and they "sought to find occasion against Daniel

concerning the kingdom; but they could find none; forasmuch as Daniel was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

"Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him: King Darius live for ever: all the presidents of the kingdom, the governors and princes, the counsellors and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm degree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man, for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his window being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

"Then they came near and spake before the king: Hast thou not signed a decree that every man that shall ask a petition of any god or man, within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said: The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Then answered they and said before the king: That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him." But Darius could devise no way in which his favorite servant and officer could be delivered. He was constrained, therefore, to pass sentence upon him, and cause him to be cast into the den of lions.

The question arises here: Why could not Darius deliver Daniel? Why could he not? This certainly could not have been for the want of power; for Darius was an absolute monarch, and had the whole power of the realm at his control. Whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down. Whom he would he saved, and whom he would he destroyed.

Nor did his inability to deliver Daniel arise from a want of disposition; for it seems that the king was most sincerely disposed to deliver him if he could. He "set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him." He passed sentence upon Daniel with great and evident reluctance;

and when the sentence had been inflicted, the king, we are told, went to his palace, and passed the night fasting, neither were instruments of music brought before him, and his sleep went from him.

But if Darius had power to deliver Daniel, and was so sincerely disposed to deliver him, the question returns, why did he not deliver him? What was the difficulty in the case?

In replying to these questions, I remark, in general, that there are many things which a monarch, however powerful, can not consistently perform. Some may have thought that an absolute monarch, who has all power in his hands, and whose will is law, can do any thing he pleases. But it is not so. An absolute monarch may be so surrounded with checks and restraints, that he has really less liberty than almost any of his subjects. There are many things which he can not, with any propriety or safety, do. He can not deny himself, or disgrace himself. He can not abrogate his own laws, or trifle with his own authority, or introduce principles of administration, which shall go to encourage transgression, or to release his subjects from their obligations of obedience. On these and the like points he must be very cautious as to the steps he takes, else he will not long be an absolute monarch, or a monarch in any sense. His misused power will pass from his hands, and revolution and confusion ensue.

With these general remarks we come back to the question, Why could not Darius deliver Daniel? Or, after what has been said, the question may rather be, How could he deliver him?

There were but two ways in which Darius could deliver Daniel. The one was, by rescinding and disowning his rash decree; and the other, by forbearing to execute it; or, which is the same, by pardoning Daniel. Suppose, then, that he had taken it upon him to rescind the law which had just been passed, and which Daniel had transgressed. But this would have been to dishonor the law, and to disgrace himself for having passed such a law. It would be virtually saying that the law was wrong, and that he had done wickedly in enacting it. Besides, this law was backed up by another, that "no decree or statute which the king established may be changed;" so that if the decree in question was rescinded and disgraced, another decree must also be rescinded and disgraced, and the very constitution of the Median empire must be subverted. Thus to dishonor his laws and disgrace himself, in the view of all his subjects, was what the great King Darius could not consent to do. Rather than hazard such a step, he preferred, though very reluctantly, to execute the decree, and commit his beloved Daniel to the den of lions.

But if Darius could not deliver Daniel by rescinding his rash decree, could he not by forbearing to execute it? Could he not dispense to his faithful and beloved officer a free and full pardon?

Without doubt, Darius thought of this expedient; but the more he thought of it, the more he saw that he could not do it. In revolving the subject, in this view perhaps the king reasoned thus with himself: "I have just enacted a [illegible] and annexed to it a dreadful penalty. I have said that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of myself, he shall be cast into the den of lions. With a perfect knowledge of this law, Daniel has repeatedly and openly transgressed it. In the high places of power he has set an example of transgression before all my subjects. And now, if I do not execute the law, if I grant him a pardon, shall I not virtually say, before the hundred and twenty provinces of my vast empire, that I regard transgression as a very slight thing; that my laws may be trifled with and trampled on at pleasure? If I pardon Daniel, shall I not dishonor, not only this law, but all my laws? Shall I not weaken their authority? Shall I not invite and encourege transgression? Shall I not introduce a principle into my administration which will work its ruin? If I do not execute this law, it will be to little purpose to me to enact any other laws, or to endeavor to enforce those which already exist. Every future transgressor will appeal to the precedent here established, and will expect to be rescued in the same way.

"Besides, how do I know that Daniel will accept of a pardon from me? To accept a pardon will be to acknowledge that he has committed an offence, or that he has done a wrong. Is it likely that Daniel will acknowledge this? Is it likely that he will accept a pardon, even if I offer him one?"

In these remarks you will perceive the difficulties which encompassed Darius on every hand. You see the reason why—powerful as he was—he could not rescue his honored and beloved Daniel from the den of lions. He could not rescind the law he had passed without dishonoring it and disgraceing himself. He could not pardon Daniel, even if Daniel would consent to be pardoned, without dishonoring his entire system of government, weakening its authority, and exposing it to contempt. The consequence was, that the trangressor of the law must feel its penalty, and Daniel must go into the den of lions.

The object of the foregoing remarks has probably, been anticipated by you all. The case of Darius and Daniel goes to illustrate another case, in which we, my friends, are personally and immensely interested. We are the rightful subjects of an absolute Monarch—the mighty Monarch of the universe. He has issued good laws for the regulation of our hearts and lives, and has annexed to them a just but a dreadful penalty. These laws we have all broken; this penalty we have all incurred. And now, in what way can we be delivered? True, our Sovereign has physical power enough to deliver us, for he is omnipotent. And he can

have no pleasure in our ruin; for he is infinitely benevolent. Still, there are some things which, with all his power, and with all his benevolence, he can not with any propriety do. He can not deny himself. He can not disgrace himself. He can not bring dishonor upon his holy law. Governing, as God does, not a hundred and twenty provinces, but unnumbered worlds; surrounded, as he is, with countless myriads of intelligent beings, friends and enemies, all of whom the subjects of his government, and all looking intently on, to watch the course of his administration; the great God can not do any thing to weaken his authority in their eyes—any thing to invite and encourage transgression. For this would be to introduce a principle that would work disorder and confusion everywhere—a principle which would subvert his throne, and ruin the universe. Our God is urged, therefore, by all the regard which he ought to have, both for himself and for his creatures—urged by all the promptings of infinite love—to maintain his authority inviolate; to support, untarnished, the honors of his throne. It is infinite goodness which prompts our holy Sovereign to declare: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law, until all be fulfilled."

The question then returns upon us: How are we, who have broken the law of God, and incurred its penalty, how are we to be delivered?

It is as true of us as it was of Daniel, that we can be delivered in only one of two ways: Our Sovereign must either rescind his laws which we have broken, or he must forbear to execute them, which is the same as to grant a pardon. Shall then the great Sovereign of the universe rescind his laws? But this, as in the case of Darius, would be to dishonor his laws, and to disgrace himself. It would be as much as to say that his laws were unreasonable, and that he had been weak or wicked in enacting them. But will our holy Sovereign ever say this? Ought he to say it? Can he say it in consistency with truth?

The degree of Darius *was* an unreasonable one, and he without doubt, did wrong in enacting it. And, however humiliating it might have been to him, and dishonoring to his laws, for him to have said as much as this, still, he could have said it with perfect truth. Perhaps he ought to have said it, and to have risked the consequences. But here is a point in which the comparison between his case and that of our holy Sovereign fails. The laws of God are perfectly good laws, and he was perfectly good in enacting them; and for him to repeal them, or set them aside, would be, not only to dishonor his law and disgrace himself, but such a measure would be inconsistent with his holiness. We may be sure, therefore, that we shall never be delivered from the dreadful penalty of the Divine law in this way. Indeed, we ought not wish to be delivered in this way. Better far that we

receive the just reward of our deeds. Better that we go, not into a den of lions, but into the place prepared for the devil and his angels, and suffer there forever, than that the holy Sovereign of the universe, in order to rescue us, should dishonor his law and disgrace himself, and do that which was inconsistent with his holiness.

How, then, are we to be delivered from that fearful penalty of the divine law, which by transgression we have incurred? If God cannot rescind his good laws, may he not forbear to execute them? in other words may he not pardon us? But here, the same difficulties press upon him which pressed upon Darius, and with as much more force as the empire of God is the more extensive and the maintenance of his authority the more important.

God has enacted the best of laws, and affixed to them a just penalty. He has published them far and wide throughout his dominions, declaring solemnly, wherever they come: The soul that sinneth, it shall die. With a full knowledge of these laws and of their penalty, and in the open presence both of our Sovereign and our fellow-subjects, we have dared to transgress. And now suppose our Sovereign does not execute the penalty. Suppose he freely remits it and gives it all up, what would be the language of such a procedure? Would it not be virtually saying that God cares very little about his law; that he thinks very lightly of transgression? He would like to have his subjects obey him, if they will; but if they will not, they have little or nothing to fear from his hands. Would not the influence of such a measure be to impair, if not to annihilate, the authority of law; to take away all respect from the Law-Giver; to invite transgression; to encourage rebelion, to subvert, ultimately, the throne of God, and fill the universe with confusion and ruin? And can we expect to be delivered from suffering the just reward of our deed at such an expense as this? Can we ask it, or so much as desire it?

What then, it may be anxiously inquired, are sinners to expect, at the hands of their offended Sovereign and Judge? Is there no hope?

To these questions I answer: If God were not infinitely wiser than men, and infinitely more benignant and merciful, there would be no hope. Darius could devise no way of escape for his beloved Daniel, though he set his heart upon it, and labored to accomplish it till the going down of the sun. And it is not likely that the most exalted of creatures would ever have discovered a way of deliverance for fallen man. As I have said already, only two methods of deliverance could be conceived of as possible. The one was for God to rescind his laws, and the other was to forbear to execute them, or (which is the same) to remit their penalty. To have resorted to the first of these methods

would have been at once to subvert and dissolve the divine government; and the objections to the other method of deliverance were, as we have seen, insuperable. To remit the penalty of the broken law and forbear to execute it, would be to dishonor the law, to detract from its authority, to trifle with transgression, and, in fact, to invite it.

To be sure, if God could devise any way in which, while he remitted the penalty of the law, he could honor it before the universe, and maintain inviolate its authority; if he could devise a way in which he could as fully satisfy his justice, and make as clear a manifestation of his holy hatred of sin, and his determination to punish it, as by inflicting the threatened penalty upon transgressors; why, then, the penalty might be safely remitted. But can any such method of deliverance be devised? Is any such possible?

It is just here, my brethren, that we are called upon to stand still, to admire, to wonder, and adore, in view of the depth and richness of that infinite wisdom which God has displayed in the redemption of sinners. What Darius could not do for Daniel, what no other monarch in the universe could do for rebellious subjects, God has been able to do for us. God has devised a way in which his holy law can be honored and its authority maintained, and yet the penalty be remitted to penitent transgressors. God has devised a way in which he can show forth to the universe his holy hatred of sin and his determination to crush it, and thus satisfy the claims of his glorious justice in which he can answer every important purpose which could be answered by the merited punishment of transgressors, while he holds out to them the free offer of pardon.

You will anticipate me when I say, that I refer here to the atonement of Christ. The wonders of which I speak, are the wonders of the Cross of Christ. By the voluntary sufferings and death of Christ, in place of the transgressor, the violated law has been honored and a way of deliverance opened. By the sufferings and death of Him who bore our sins in his own body on the tree, God has made such a display of his holy hatred of sin, and his displeasure against it, that he can now safely and consistently forgive all those who will comply with the easy terms of salvation, or to express the whole in the precise language of the Apostle Paul: "Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 25, 26.)

The subject which has been before us is full of instruction in regard to that great central doctrine of the Christian system—atonement by the blood of Christ. I shall have time to insist,

however, on only one of the important lessons which it brings before us, and that is the necessity of an atonement, in order to lay a foundation for the forgiveness of sins. Darius felt this necessity, and because he could devise no adequate atonement for his beloved Daniel he was obliged to pass sentence upon him, and consign him to the den of lions. The elder Brutus felt this necessity, and because he could devise no sufficient atonement for his two sons when they had committed treason against the Roman commonwealth, was obliged himself to pass sentence of death upon them, and to stand by and see it executed. Every father of a family, every teacher of a common school, has felt this necessity, and has often had his ingenuity tasked to find a substitute—to think of something which could be done on the ground of which the infliction of a threatened punishment might be avoided. The great Monarch of the universe felt this necessity; and it was this which brought the Saviour to the cross. Christ did not die for nothing. He did not die for a trifle. He did not submit to his deep humiliation, suffering, death and without an urgent necessity, and this necessity was to make an atonement for sin. He shed his blood for the remission of sins. Had not he died, every transgressor on the face of the earth must have died, and died eternally. No son or daughter of Adam could ever have been saved. To have forgiven sin without an atonement would have been, as we have seen, to dishonor the law, to weaken its authority, to disgrace the Law-Giver, to invite and encourage transgression, to trifle with sin, to introduce a principle of administration which, pursued to its legitimate results, would subvert and dissolve any government that ever existed. Surely, then, there was need of an atonement—a full and adequate atonement—if sinners were ever to be pardoned and saved.

It should be observed farther, that as sinners can not be saved without an atonement, so they can be saved in no other way than by the atonement. Strange as it may seem, there are those in this world who madly reject the atonement which has been made for them, and think to be saved in some other way. Some reject it openly and confessedly, denying in words that any atonement for sin was ever needed, or has ever been made. And more, probably who do not reject the atonement in words, reject and despise it in their hearts. They are seeking and striving to obtain salvation in some other way. By their good deeds or good resolutions, by their voluntary sufferings, their ritual observances, their merits acquired in one way or another, they hope to do something toward attaining salvation; and they trust that God will forgive what they can not do without an atonement. But such hopes, we see, are assuredly vain. They are worse than vain; they are presumptuous and sinful. God saw, in eternity, that he could not consistently forgive sin without an atone-

ment, and it was because he could not that he was at the infinite expense of providing an atonement for us. And now is it likely that he will set aside this great, this painful, and expensive work in accommodation to the errors and fancies of a portion of our race; and because they do not see any need of an atonement, and are inclined to reject it, that he will save them in some other way? In what other way can he save them? And if he could, would not the doing of it on any other ground, be the height of indignity to his suffering Son? Would it not be pouring contempt upon his precious blood?

Besides, if a part of our race were saved and carried to heaven without an atonement, what would be their condition when they arrive there? There would then be two sorts of sinners in heaven, and the celestial palace would resound with two very different anthems of praise. One portion of the redeemed would sing: "All glory to the Saviour! All glory to Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood!" While another portion would tune their voices in an opposite strain and say: "All glory to ourselves! All glory to our merits, to our penances, to our performances, by which we were enabled to rise to heaven without the intervention of atoning blood!" Do you believe that there will ever be such jargon in heaven? Do you believe that any of our race will ever go there except through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ?

The sin of wilfully rejecting the atoning blood of Christ, and substituting something else, is, in my estimation, a dreadful sin. It is a fatally ruinous sin. It is, of all others, most emphatically damning to the soul. Until it is found out—in direct contradiction to the language of Scripture—that some other name has been given among men whereby we may be saved besides that of Jesus, we are bound to believe, and it is not uncharitable to believe, that no person who understandingly and willfully rejects the atonement of Christ can ever come within the gates of the Celestial City.

Let me not be misunderstood, however, on this point. I do not say that a person may not be saved in ignorance of the atonement.

I hope that some of the heathen are saved. If any of them are truly pious, I feel confident that they are. I hope and believe that children, who die in infancy, are saved. They are saved in ignorance of the atonement, but not in a rejection of it. I can conceive, too, that adult persons, in this Christian land, owing to a want of instruction, or to wrong instruction, may have grown up in such ignorance or misapprehension of the atonement as not to be capable of understandingly rejecting it. All these persons may be saved through Christ without knowing the precise method of their deliverance. Their hearts may be essentially right in the sight of God. They may be prepared, in

the temper of their minds, to close with Christ so soon as they come where he is and understand his claims. But here is a person whose eyes are open, and with a full understanding of the doctrine of atonement, he puts it from him. He openly, willingly, heartily rejects it. How is such an one to be forever benefited by the atonement? How is he to be saved by it? For myself, I must confess that I do not see how.

In conclusion, let me invite and entreat all those before me, who have not yet put their trust in Christ to reject now, as delusive and ruinous, every other foundation of hope, and come receive, embrace the Lord Jesus. You see, my friends, your situation—sinners, transgressors of God's holy law, and exposed to suffer its penalty forever. God has no wish to destroy you more than Darius had to destroy Daniel; but without an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ how can he save you? How can he do such dishonor to himself and to his law? How can he pour such contempt upon the blood of his son? It was love which prompted the Divine Being to resort to the painful expedient of an atonement—to part with his beloved Son, and give him up to suffering and death; and now shall this matchless love and this infinite sacrifice be of no avail to you? Will you continue to reject it, and tread it under foot? O sinners! why will ye do so? How can you be so ungrateful to God? How can you so trifle with the blood of the Saviour? How can you so put at hazard, yea, utterly cast away and destroy, your own immortal interest? No, flee to the Saviour while you may. Build all your hopes of salvation upon him. He will never leave you nor forsake you. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life."

SERMON VI.

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THE CHILDLIKE SPIRIT.

"AT the same time came the disciples to Jesus, saying, Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—MATT. xviii. 1—3.

THE bitter and evil nature of this controversy of the disciples as to who should be greatest, was heightened by a fact which we learn from the parallel passage in Mark, that the dispute sprang up immediately after the wonderful and celestial scene of the transfiguration; and, in truth, it appears to have grown out of the Lord's choice of three disciples, Peter, James, and John, to ascend the glorified mountain with him. These favored disciples may have been unduly dazzled by the honor; and the others, moved with secret envy, may have been as unduly depressed. Peter may have urged his claim to the primacy, because long before this the Messiah had singled him out by declaring that his faith was the foundation upon which he would build his church. Andrew may have retorted, that he was the one who, first of them all, had found the Messiah. John may have thought that he had already received marks of peculiar love and confidence from Christ. Philip may have set forth the direct and personal call of the Lord to him, saying: "Follow me."

Jesus did not appear at the time to notice or rebuke them; but when they had all come to their common abode in Capernaum, he asked them what it was they had disputed about by the way? From a feeling of shame they gave him no answer. And then Jesus took a little child and set him in the midst of them; and when he had taken him in his arms, he said to them: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whoever therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Doubtless the disciples could not yet conceive of a new kingdom, without something of an outward organization, form, and splendor; although in one sense, the kingdom that Christ established on earth was not new, but as old as the Old Testament, as old as man, and heaven. But the difficulty lay deeper than their

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ignorance of the kingdom of God—it lay in their unspiritualized natures, or in the feebleness of the new principle of the heavenly life in them. Their spirit remained as yet in the low, human circle of things, and they saw all things from a human point of view.

But to enter the kingdom of heaven was not by human power or merit; it was by being converted and becoming as a little child. It was not by a man's raising himself to God, but by God's coming down to him, and transforming him into the image of the heavenly. It was a change, not an act, nor, at first, a virtue.

The first great simple truth, therefore, which the words of the text reveal to us—and this whole striking scene of a child set up to preach to angry and contending men—is, that for any man to enter the kingdom of heaven, *there must be a deep spiritual change wrought in him.* This truth separates the religion of Christ from all human religions, or human theories of Christianity, in which no power outside of man's own nature is thought necessary for goodness and perfection. This change is so deep and radical that it is equivalent to a new life, or a new birth. The spirit of man is so profoundly sinful that nothing will touch it but regeneration. The Saviour, speaking of this change, said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, (or, more literally, from above,) he can not see the kingdom of God." For this there is needed a communication from the great Author of Life. This is God's work alone. It requires a manifestation of the same original creative power that made the universe. As Christ touched the corpse of the widow's son that was being borne through the gate of Nain to its burial, and the crimson life reddened the pale cheek, and the breast heaved, and he rose up and spoke comforting words to his mother and friends; so the compassionate and regenerating touch of the Holy Spirit must be felt, to have this new life enter a dead soul. It is not the creation of a new soul, or of any new spiritual faculty; but it is the ressurrection of the soul, to a new state of being—its awakening to the use of all its powers with a new purpose, and from a new and higher centre of life.

Wherever this higher life has been communicated in times and ways that belong to God's unseen Spirit, and that can not be entirely known to us, it manifests itself in new forms and lineaments, however faint, that contradict the usual course of nature and common spirit of man. It shows its divine parentage. All the expressions of this heavenly life could be comprehended in no symbol with more wonderful beauty, than in the symbol of a little child, who has just received the mysterious gift of life, and is held in the arms of Christ as the sustaining power. They could be comprehended no more fully and profoundly than in *the new*

childlike spirit. This, above all, is an humble spirit. In the little child, the sense of individual or selfish life, has not yet developed itself; but he shows his opening life humbly and joyfully with all. Depending on others for life, the child's will lies in the embrace of the parent's will; and yet he feels not the law, but plays and leaps in the charmed circle. How could the heavenly life begin to come forth and show itself in a corrupt and unbelieving world, more unmistakably than in this childlike spirit? It is a new spirit. What would a proud Roman, contemporary with Christ and his disciples, just as this magnificent epoch of the establishment of that empire, which aimed at universal dominion, have said to the setting up of a little child, as symbolizing a kingdom that was to absorb and outlast its own and all other kingdoms? And what would he have thought of the Head—the Founder of that universal and everlasting kingdom—"humbling himself" to take the form, and not only the form, but the spirit, of a little child, lying helpless as human infancy is, in the manger of Bethlehem? He would have treated the thought of "the holy child Jesus" with scorn. But as the King thus humbled himself and became as a little child, so must the subjects of this new kingdom humble themselves, that they may reign with him in this singular realm, were there is no room for the sentiments of ambition or envy; and he that is great must be as he that serveth. Christ's word to each of his disciples is: "Deny *thyself*, and take up *thy* cross and follow *me*." He who follows me, lives, though in an infinitely lower sense, my life over again. He denies and crucifies the old selfish life. The first separate and selfish life is lost, and there is a second and higher life, that is joined with the life of God and the life that runs through his heavenly kingdom. This principle of self-denial—which was carried to its highest point in the cross where the highest life of all was freely denied, poured out, and lost, for the lowest and humblest, in order to manifest the loving will of the Father to the lowest and vilest—forms the vital law from which everything in this new kingdom springs, and is, above all, its entrance law. One must be converted and become as a little child, to enter this kingdom. He must, as it were, turn round and tread back his whole life, its windings of pride and wastes of selfishness, until he comes to his very childhood, fresh from the hand of God, standing face to face with God and eternity, without a wish or will of his own, humbly rejoicing to take from the divine hand the unspeakable gift of life. When one comes to this simplicity of mind—when he feels the evil and real helplessness for good of his own selfish nature and will—then he is fit to receive God's new life and will, and to enter his heavenly kingdom.

This sincere confession of *sin*, this true humility, this entire self-condemnation in the sight of the pure and all-searching One—

this is the condition for the gift of the renewing Spirit. This humility stands like a little child pleading at the threshhold of the kingdom of heaven. But will a proud man humble himself? Will he become as a little child? Will he call for help because he is helpless? Will he believe, as well as confess, that there is absolutely nothing in him that is pleasing to God, but every thing that is selfish and corrupted?—that not an act, nor a desire, is selfish and corrupted?—that not an act, nor a desire, is pure? Daniel Webster is reported once to have said, in conversation with a Christian friend, that it is the hardest thing in the world for any man, in his full strength, to confess himself an undeserving sinner.

The new and heavenly kingdom which Christ has founded in the earth, is thus altogether a spiritual kingdom. It is humility, purity, holiness, in the inward parts—the kingdom of God within men. Is is a life that is as unnoticed as a little child. It is not a new church, beautiful in its forms, and magnificent in its show of prescriptive and divine authority. It is not a new doctrine, or a new philosophy, or a new morality, or even, in the deepest sense, a new religion; but it is a new spirit. It is the childlike spirit of heaven. Although it must manifest itself in the outward life, and in the visible though simple forms and brotherhood of the Christian Church, it is the quiet development of the hidden life of God within; showing itself rather in the divine *spirit* of what one says, and does, and is, than in any external glory of act or life. This childlike spirit does not so much say that it loves man or God, as it is itself that "love unfeigned," which is the very spirit of God, into which it is new-born, "for love is of God; and every one that lovest is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."

We say that one is a changed man, not because he differs from the well-known friend whom we greet daily in the familiar walks and occupation of life, whether he be cloudy or sunny in his disposition, fiery or slow, plodding or imaginative; not because his outward individuality is in the slightest degree destroyed or changed, but because we see in his spirit the principle of a new life, a heavenly motive of love, which throws around his whole being a simplicity and moral greatness, that we never observed in him before. It is because, as the Apostle says, he "is renewed in the spirit of his mind."

But looking more carefully at this childlike spirit of the new kingdom, we see that it is capable of development into many similar though distinct qualities, while their germinating spirit is one, and all of them are toned and mingled with the heavenly spirit of humility.

The first distinctive quality of this childlike spirit which we would briefly notice, is *Truth*. He who has this spirit has a clear

apprehension, we might say intuition, of Divine Truth. He has not only the love of it, but the comprehension of it. There is truth, if anywhere to be found, in the spirit of a little child, for God has made the child to love truth. The child's spirit, when it acts unconstrainedly, feeds upon truth as its daily bread. He is ignorant; and yet he is not ashamed of his ignorance, but he asks to be taught; and he throws open all the doors of his eager mind to be filled, believing that all things are his—earth, heaven, yea, God himself. Let me here quote from another, who was a keen and bold observer of our nature in all its stages: "My opinion is, that where circumstances favor, where the heart is deep, where humility and tenderness exist in strength, where the situation is favorable as to solitude and as to genial feelings, children have a specific power of contemplating the truth, which departs as they enter the world. It is clear to me that children, upon elementary paths which require no knowledge of the world to unravel, tread more firmly than men; have a more pathetic sense of justice; and, according to the immortal ode of our great laureate, 'On the Intimations of Immorality in Childhood,' a far closer communion with God Observe in St. Matthew, chapter twenty-one, and verse fifteen, *who* were those that, crying in the temple, made the first public recognition of Christianity. Then, if you say, 'O but children echo what they hear, and are no independent authorities!' I must request you to extend your reading into verse sixteen, where you will find that the testimony of these children, as bearing an *original* value, was ratified by the highest testimony, and the recognition of these children did itself receive a heavenly recognition. And this could not have been unless there were children in Jerusalem, who saw into truth with a far sharper eye than Sanhedrims and Rabbis." "Spiritual things" are thus, as the Scripture says, "spiritually discerned." He who is born and led of the Spirit of God, recognizes the divine beauty, word, and will of Christ, wherever they are revealed, even as the children of Jerusalem first of all, recognized Christ. The regenerate mind is led by the Spirit to a higher eminence than ordinary men occupy; and then the Spirit clears the eye of its mists of dishonesty and doubt, so that it sees far over the fields of divine knowledge.

Secondly. *Freedom.* The new spirit of the kingdom of God has in it also the freedom of a child's spirit, and enters into the liberty of the children of God. The artificiality of the mere Pharisee in religion, and the rigidity of the mere moralist, disappear. There is a glad freedom in the service of God which the sublimest principle of duty without love could never inspire. It is the joy, and the very impulse of the new spiritual life, to do the will of God. This freedom is likewise chiefly of the spirit, or, as it is sometimes called, of the will. There is, it is true, a native freedom of the will, which is an essential truth of our being, and lies at the foundation of moral accountability; but while the great

subject of the "Freedom of the Will" has been the theme of discussion by the profoundest minds; and while it is the noblest of themes for the study of the theologian and philosopher, yet in one sense, the endlessness of these discussions, and the futility of expecting to arrive at any satisfactory solution or rest from discussion in the natural modes of reasoning and thought, is vividly illustrated by the poet's continuing the barren debate among the restless spirits who fell from heaven. Where, excepting in the Christian solution of the problem, in the reconciliation of the divine and human wills, the bringing of the human spirit into oneness with the Divine Spirit, in the new life and love of Christ, can the freedom of the human will ever be unmistakably and practically established? As the child is perfectly free in every act, while perfectly dependent, so the renewed man is adopted by the Spirit into that freedom of the children of God, wherein the Spirit of bondage again to fear is removed, and the man rejoices once more to act freely and spontaneously as when he was a child. And when we think at what a priceless sacrifice this freedom of God's children was purchased, how dearly should we prize it; and how careful should we be, not to let it sink into an unscrupulous carelessness in the Christian life and service! In the constant education and training of this free will, until it become capable of great achievements, until it become invincibly strong, like Christ's, to do the will of the Father, lies the true growth of the Christian, from his childship to the full manhood in Christ Jesus.

Thirdly. *Unworldliness.* This is the spirit which denies itself especially of worldly honor, success and power. The little child has no dream as yet of power. On the contrary, every word and act show his acknowledged sense of weakness and dependence. But to the unspiritual mind it is misery to be weak. Such a mind is often led to despise goodness itself, because there is sometimes an apparent weakness in goodness; and it says, if one must be weak to be good, then welcome evil, and the curse that evil brings, if it bring but power with it. Power, that is made palpable in some worldly success; power, that lifts a man from the mass of incapable men, and stamps him with individuality; power, however obtained, this is the meaning and pith of life. It is safe to say, that the love of power lies concealed in every man's heart, waiting a favorable opportunity to develope itself; for did not even the disciples of Christ contend in the very presence of their divine Master who of them should be greatest? Perhaps the deepest principle of the natural mind, of every unrenewed human mind and kingdom, is the love of power resolving itself into self-will; of power having its brief sway in the possession of mere physical strength; of power cherishing its conscious ability to control men by knowledge, eloquence, and superior intelligence; of power working by means of ecclesiastical combinations, to domineer over the free thought and consciences of men; of power aiming through wealth to com-

mand the human concession of greatness; of power grasping resolutely, amid the wildest waves of passion, the great object of enthroning *self-will*, or the right to do one's own will, and to be a law unto one's self. This is symbolized, and is it not often especially so in the mind of the intellectual man and student, by some crowned king of thought, some Humboldt, Shakspeare, or "divine Julius," some great man whose powerful genius claims a universal sway over man and nature?

But in striking contrast to this worldly principle of power, symbolized by the great man, the principle of the heavenly kingdom, is humility, symbolized by the little child. And yet, though thus humble, this childlike principle is really no principle of weakness, but of strength; for we might go on to show where true power lies, and from whence it springs. We might admit that there is a certain power in the force of human will, in an unrenewed though vigorous nature, and even in pure evil itself. A highwayman, or an incendiary, is, in one sense, a man of power. He who recklessly lays hold of the powers of evil, will be a powerful man to work evil, even as the evil spirit himself, is a strong spirit.

But these evil forces, being turned aside from the true and divine course of things, have a tremendous recoil, causing the final weakening and destruction of him who uses them. His power therefore, and the power of every mere human kingdom separate from God, has a limit, and then continually grows less. The chains of darkness under which Satan will be bound to work ill no more, are doubtless these very evil forces, these prides, policies, lies, oppressions, wrongs, impieties, that he has used, which are driven back by the fire of God's violated law, and forged into chains of adamant to bind their inventor. "The virtues are the true forces," as an English statesman recently said. There is no real power outside of goodness. "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God."

True greatness of spirit consists in acknowledging, as simply and humbly as a little child would acknowledge it, this truth, that the good God is the only spring of power. For this reason, in the deepest humiliation of the outward life and glory of the Christian, his spiritual life is most mightily renewed; for then God's power is most truly perfected in him. When he is humanly weak, then he is divinely strong.

Even in the natural world, wherein spiritual things are sometimes strangely imitated, the greatest men and the simplest, are those who suffer themselves to be taught by God in nature with the simplicity of little children, not despising the least whisper of his voice and law. This is the condition of the profoundest science. The highest praise which could be bestowed upon a modern poet was, to call him "an eternal child." We have in the text before us, the Saviour's own testimony, that in the moral and spiritual world, he

is greatest who becomes as a little child, who becomes childlike: and why? Simply because a man then comes into that higher spiritual kingdom, into that new heavenly spirit, in which he is nearer the centre of power and greatness, the truth, will, and life of God. God dwelling in the soul of a regenerated man, gives him a new and progressive power for all that is good and great. This is not saying, that the renewed man looses any thing of his natural force, and peculiar intellectual power, or becomes literally a child in mind; it is rather saying, that all the energies of his mind are simplified, are made one, by one celestial childlike purpose of love to God; are filled with a divine spirit, and are thus lifted out of the low and selfish life in which they soon become wasted and lost, into that higher life in which they grow stronger and stronger for ever.

Lastly. *Filial Love.* The childlike spirit of the kingdom of heaven is, perhaps, in no way more clearly and delightfully manifested, than in this instinctive and loving recognition of God as a Father. This filial love is the essence of faith, for it is the very spirit of Christ, the Son. Sad as it is, this loving faith in our heavenly Father, is not an instinct of our unrenewed nature. The heart has been injured by sin far more than the head. Sin is indeed simply the wilful separation of ourselves from the will and love of God the Father. To be able then to return to God and to say "Our Father," requires something more than a cold process of the reason, or a forced acknowledgment of the conscience. It is a movement of the *heart* toward the Father—the spirit's inward change from the love of sin, to the love of God. It implies a broken-hearted return from every other object of love to God. It implies a spiritual re-union with God, a love of those things that he loves, a joyful service of his holy will, a childlike trust in all that he does, whether pleasing or otherwise, an ardent desire of constant communion and fellowship with the infinite spirit of the Father. Nature, like the first man, who was the natural man, hides from the voice of the Father, that sounds like the voice of doom to his sin-weakened conscience. Unregenerated nature often acknowledges God outwardly, recognizes him in science, bows before him in public worship, enthrones him in the high hills, and seats him among the bright and inaccessible stars; but nature goes no further. She would not have God come nearer than this; she would not acknowledge God in the inner spirit, nor permit him to enter the soul to look upon its secret defilements, to chasten its sinful lusts, to purify and sanctify it, and to dwell continually in the soul as a dear and holy Father. This sweet and inexpressible privilege is given us through Christ: "For no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him." And "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts whereby ye cry, Abba, Father." Here is the inward rest of the spirit! Here

is the everlasting love for which we pine!—the wandering child that returns to its heavenly Father, and lays all its sins, and cares, and ambitions and sorrows, upon the infinite paternal heart of divine, unchanging Love.

This fatherly heart of our God, should it not be found by all of us?

If to possess this child-spirit, which is to enter the kingdom of heaven, is the gift of God alone, then the soul must put itself in contact with God, in order to gain it. In some way or another the soul must find God, the Father. Even the old Testament saints living in the shadows of things to come, like Job and David, found new spiritual life the moment they found God. They beheld their sins as in the light of his countenance, as committed against him alone. They cried, "We are unclean and undone before thee, O God," and they came to him—the Source of Life—to have the clean heart created, and the right spirit renewed within them. God met and entered their humbled spirits, and made them whole in his righteousness. God is not hard to be found by any one. Even as his living Spirit fills this nature about us, and gives life to every beast and bird, to every plant and flower, and they live upon him and draw from him—the Father of all; and he renews the face of earth, brings life out of death, and makes the joyful light of each new day of life to quietly shine; so his renewing Spirit fills the spiritual world, and is in all minds and spirits, ready to help their infirmities, and heal their sicknesses, and is divinely able at any moment to give them new life, and cause his joyful light to shine upon them. But to the closed human spirit, the proud, the unprayerful, the unseeking, this new life never comes. This is a spirit "whom the world"—the passion-blinded, unbelieving, uncaring world—"cannot receive." But "our heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that *ask* him than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children" And if there be any who feel that they have no interest in this new and heavenly kingdom, that they cannot rejoice in its pure joys and glories, but are still in the outer realm of unforgiven sin and death, let them not wait for some great outward movement, some earthquake convulsion, some kingdom of power that cometh with observation; but let them hear God's still small voice of love whispering in the inward spirit. The gracious dispensation and reign of the Holy Spirit on earth, imparting as it were the virtue of the purifying blood of Jesus, to every sinful soul that will suffer itself to be cleansed thereby, is already begun. God's kingdom of heaven is even now come with power, to every childlike, humble, seeking soul. None such shall fail of it. "Seek, and ye shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

THE FULTON STREET PRAYER-MEETING.

THE remarkable and encouraging activities of this consecrated spot still continue. It is truly wonderful how many and varied requests for prayer are sent in from different and distant places over the earth, and how many answers to prayer are recorded, and many are not. The Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting in its teachings and influence may be regarded as a great revival sermon preached to all Christians who believe in the doctrine and efficacy of fervent prayer. This meeting and the answers to prayer which are recorded seem like a standing and perpetual memorial of God's fidelity in hearing the prayers of his people when they are in earnest. The whole history of this meeting presents most encouraging facts to stimulate Christians in all parts of the land to pray for the reviving and converting influences of the Holy Spirit.

The interest in the meetings does not diminish, but for several weeks past there has been very deep interest in the Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting, and the old revival spirit of 1857 and 1858 begins to be in some measure manifest. We have frequent reports of revivals from other places, as having [illegible]ommenced since the week of [illegible]ayer.

A STRIKING ANSWER TO PRAYER.

A CLERGYMAN, while acting as the leader of the meeting one day said he wished to relate an incident as being due to this meeting which had just come to his knowledge.

Some time ago, a gentleman was in this meeting from Minnesota. He came, as many others do, with no intention of saying a word; but during the progress of the meeting his feelings became very much aroused in regard to the church in far-off Minnesota, of which he was a member, so that he felt compelled to arise and ask prayer in their behalf. The gentleman stated that the church was feeble and small, and there was no unusual religious interest in it. But they had resolved, before he came away, to observe the week of prayer.

The deep desire of his heart was that the week of prayer should be the means of a revival in that little church in Minnesota. He stated this as his request. It was made the subject of earnest prayer in the meeting.

The brother went home in time to be present during the week of prayer in his own church, and was there to see how wonderfully God answered prayer offered here.

While they were praying that the Lord would pour out his

Spirit on all the world, God poured out his Holy Spirit upon them in great power, and the last intelligence was that of all classes and conditions and ages, forty had made public profession of their faith in Jesus, and this glorious work was still in progress.

At the meeting on Monday, February the twenty-ninth, reports of revivals were given as now in progress in various places in New-England and in the state of New-York, of a most cheering character. In one town, ten young ladies without knowing each other's anxieties, had called on their pastor to inquire what they should do to be saved. In another town, seventy hopeful conversions had occurred. The numerous instances mentioned indicate that God is pouring out his Spirit on the churches, and only needs the fervent, effectual prayers of his people in order to pour them out an abundant blessing. There should be a Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting in every large city and village, till the whole land is watered and blessed with renovating grace.

THE CLOSET HOUR.

SOME one has remarked that there is but one place where long prayers are appropriate, and that is in the closet. And surely we have much to ask forgiveness for, many blessings to acknowledge and to crave for the future; yet how often we hasten through the duty with a wandering heart, and but little feeling of the petitions we offer! Oh! not so would we come into the presence of an earthly sovereign, and plead for our life. How few of the surrounding objects would catch our eye, or divert, for an instant, our attention! Who would like to have his closet prayers written out, and interlined with all the wandering thoughts that intervene? Would he dare to read aloud the petition on his bended knees, or would he consent to give it into the hands of even a fellow-being for perusal?

We should "prepare our hearts to seek his face." We can not come from the hot haste of our worldly pursuits, and rush into God's presence with an acceptable sacrifice. Meditation should precede our offering, and the door of the mind be carefully shut against the world, or it will be only "lip service."

An old man used to say, with considerable pride, that he had not omitted saying the prayer his mother taught him, a single night, for seventy years. A severe illness came upon him, and he was led to see himself as a great sinner, who must be saved by the free mercy of Christ. His last years were spent as an humble Christian, and he was often heard to say: "I am the old man who said his prayers for seventy years, yet all that time never prayed at all."

Ah! how often might the same be said of us when we come forth from our closet devotions, and go about our wordly pursuits again!

We have no more prayed than if we had merely taken a newspaper in our hand, and read a paragraph from it.

Oh! how should we double our watch about our closet-door! Here is where declension and apostacy always begins. Here is the only place where the Christian armor can be girded on, and strength obtained to wield it manfully.—*Presbyterian.*

WHILE IT IS CALLED TO-DAY.

To-day, "while it is called to-day," is really all the time there is. That which is called "yesterday" is time no longer. While it was called "to-day," it was a reality; it was here; it was ours to use, to improve, to enjoy, to profit by; but since we began to call it yesterday, it is ours no longer—indeed, it is a fact no longer; it is out of existence. All there was of it, and all we could make of it, was while it was called *to-day*. Yesterday—last week—last year—these are but phrases denoting periods that existed only while they were "called to-day."

There is no such thing as *to-morrow*, and there never shall be as a real entity, an actual matter of fact. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow," for "to-morrow" does not exist until it comes to be "called to-day." To-morrow is only a word—an expectation—not a reality. When it comes into being, it is as to-day, and not at all as to-morrow. Strive as we may to peer into the future, we shall find nothing there, for there is nothing until it comes; and when it comes, and while it lasts, it is simply "while it is called to-day."

But to-day, in character and value, is that it is very largely as the result of the departed and dead yesterdays. They in their succession, while they were "called to-day," were working out issues to give shape and coloring to what should come after them, and this present, actual to-day, bears the marks which they have left behind. And so to-morrow, when it becomes to-day, shall be greatly shaped by the mould which to-day is preparing for it. Who does not know this? yet how few seem to understand it!

The great art of life, then, is rightly to estimate and well to improve to-day. To-day is every thing. "While it is called to-day," time and opportunity are here for all that is required of us. But they wait not—they linger not. To-day is fast dying into yesterday, and just ready to take its place with the dead and buried past. May the Great Teacher help us so to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, "while it is called to-day."—*Christian Sec.*

"IF I COULD ONLY SEE MY MOTHER."

"If I could only see my mother!"

Again and again was that yearning cry repeated:

If I could only see my mother!"

The vessel rocked, and the waters, chased by a fresh wind, played musically against the side of the ship. The sailor, a second mate, quite youthful, lay in his narrow bed, his eye glazing, his limbs stiffening, his breath failing. It was not pleasant to die thus in this shaking, plunging ship; but he seemed not to mind his bodily comfort; his eye looked far away, and ever and anon broke forth that grieving cry:

"If I could only see my mother!"

An old sailor sat by, the Bible in his hand, from which he had been reading. He bent above the young man, and asked him why he was so anxious to see the mother he had wilfully left.

"Oh! that's the reason!" he cried in anguish; "I've nearly broken her heart, and I can't die in peace. She was a good mother to me—oh! so good a mother!

She bore every thing from her wild boy, and once she said: 'My son, when you come to die you will remember this.' Oh! if I could only see my mother!"

He never saw his mother. He died with that cry upon his lips, as many a one has died who has slighted the mother who loved him.

THAT TESTIMONY.

Do not withhold it; you know not what good it may do. A few weeks ago in a Sabbath evening meeting, in a church where there is no special revival, the honest testimony of a lad in favor of religion fastened upon the heart of a thoughtless young lady, who, we trust, bas now a hope in Christ. "Ye are my witnesses." A straightforward, honest testimony for God will often effect what a powerful argument or appeal can not do.

Let the parent, teacher, or business man watch an oppotunity to say a word *from the heart* to child, pupil, or customer, about the salvation of the soul, and it will do more good oftentimes than a sermon or an exhortation in meeting, or an admonition from a minister. —*Morning Star.*

THE LORD'S DAY.

"REMEMBER the Sabbath day to keep it holy."—EXODUS xx. 8.

THE present, undoubtedly, is the generation which is to decide the fate of this great nation, by deciding whether the Sabbath shall be preserved or blotted out. The question before the nation is, whether it is to be a day of virtue or of sin; a day for God or a day for the devil. Wherever the Sabbath is not, man forgets God, and God forsakes man.

To the Sabbath will your salvation be owed, if you attain salvation. On your course in regard to the Sabbath will depend much of the peace or the sorrow of the bed of death. On this day, the amendment of your soul, your victory over sin and temptation, are to be resolved on and achieved. What fitter time to converse with our Lord than on the Lord's day? What fitter day to ascend to heaven than that on which he rose from earth and triumphed over death and hell? Use your Sabbaths as steps to glory, till you have passed them all, and are there arrived.

When will my pilgrimage be done,
The world's long week be o'er,
That Sabbath dawn which needs no sun,
That day which fades no more?

THE DYING SOLDIER.

ONE Sabbath, just after the service at the Christian Commission chapel, a man asked me to go to the hospital in great haste, for a dying man was calling loudly for me. I went as quickly as possible, and as I entered the door of the building, I saw him about half way down the ward, throwing his hands in the air and crying out in great distress. I hastened to his side and took his hand in mine.

"O sir!" said he, "I am glad you have come. I am going to die. I am not prepared, and I don't want to go to ruin."

In broken sentences he told his story. "I have at home a praying mother and sister. From my youth up I have been religiously instructed. I never indulged in the vile habits and vices that I have so often seen in those around me; but I never gave my heart to

Jesus. I never prayed for pardon or a fitness to die. I know and feel that I am guilty before God, and am not prepared to meet him. Three nights ago I attended the meeting at the chapel, I was deeply wrought upon during the sermon. When the invitation was given, and so many went forward for prayers, I partly rose to my feet to go also; but the thought occurred to me that I had better wait till another night, and I took my seat again. I did not think I was going to be thrown upon my bed again so soon; but here I am, and know that I shall soon die. Eternity is just before me, and twenty-five years of sin stare me in the face. O sir! pray for me!"

I engaged in prayer, after which I tried to direct him to Jesus, told him of the love and mercy of God in Christ, and quoted many of the exceeding great and precious promises of God. My whole spirit was stirred within me. It was of no avail. The thought that he had all his life rejected Christ, and now, when he could do it no longer, was asking him to save him, seemed an insurmountable obstacle to his acceptance. During the day he was so weak I could not converse with him, but an expression of despair was upon his features as he faintly whispered: "Pray, pray for me." Soon reason left her throne; the darkness of death fell upon him, and in a few moments, with that same look of horror stamped on his countenance, he had gone to the judgment, his destiny sealed forever. But three days before, he partly rose to his feet for prayers, but *put it off till another night!*

We laid him in the soldier's grave. His own earnest request was that his mother should never know the circumstances of his unhappy end. He said it would kill her.—*S. S. Times.*

ORIENTAL FABLE.

The Ministering Angel, commissioned by the All-merciful Father to watch over the flowers, to nourish them with the juices of the earth, and water them with the dews of heaven, one day, after performing his morning duties, sat down upon a bed of soft green moss, to look at what he had done, and meditate upon the love and goodness of Our Father, in making all things so beautiful. Absorbed in these thoughts, he fell asleep; but the day was wearing on, and the sun beat down with such violence upon him that a flourishing Rose-bush, to which he had always been particularly kind, gratefully bent her branches over him to shield him from the intense heat.

When the gentle Spirit awoke, refreshed with his repose and saw to what he was indebted for it, he exclaimed "Beautiful flower; never shall I forget your kind care! How shall I repay the service you have rendered me? Speak! your utmost wishes shall be granted!" For had the hot rays of the sun shone on him, he would have vanished in a mist-wreath.

With a deep blush the Rose replied: "If you indeed love me, give me still another charm, that I may appear to you yet more beautiful." The Spirit paused; then, with a smile, he tore a tuft from the bed on which he reclined, and wrapping it about her, murmured: "The Mantle of Modesty will heighten all the rest."

From that hour they have worn the green velvet cloak in memory of this event.

Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."
—Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."
—Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON VII.

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THE CHURCH THE BIRTHPLACE OF SOULS.

"AND of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her."—PSALM 87: 5.

THIS is a psalm of triumph, written, as some suppose, to be sung when Jerusalem was delivered from the Assyrians during the reign of Hezekiah. In an elevated strain the Psalmist celebrates Jehovah's love for Zion, the city of God. Glorious things, predictions, and promises had been spoken in that honored city, things which were certain to be fulfilled. Among these, as mentioned in the fourth and sixth verses, was the fact that Zion was to be the birthplace of nations, the city of their spiritual nativity. Egypt, Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, and Ethiopia are mentioned as representing all nations who were to be converted to God through an agency of which Zion was the chief seat, the home. The time was to come when the nations, instead of besieging and assaulting Jerusalem to destroy her, would be joyfully named by them as their spiritual birthplace. In the fifth verse, the same imposing

idea is presented in regard to persons; of individuals it would be true as just asserted of nations: "And of Zion it shall be said that this and that man were born there." This was named as the chief glory of Zion, and in consequence of this, it is further asserted that "the Highest himself shall establish her."

In the largest and most imposing sense, the true Zion is the Church universal on earth, including all Christ's believers, without respect to ecclesiastical distinctions. The Zion of Hezekiah was the brilliant symbol of a diviner Zion, the Universal Church, in which is to be realized the regeneration of the nations. This Zion in the fullest sense is ordained of Jehovah to be the spiritual birthplace of nations. Here or nowhere, by this agency or by none, is the world to be converted, and the whole creation groaning and travailing together in pain until now, to be delivered from its bondage of corruption.

But descending from this grand generalization of the Church catholic, we may select the individual Church which is held together by a common faith in Christ, by a mutual love among its members, and a polity to which all submit as upon the whole, and in their circumstances the best through which they can carry forward the great purposes for which the Church was instituted. Such a church is local, and includes numbers so limited that its members are well known to one another. It may be independent of other similar churches, or it may be a part of an organized church or denomination, whose will in certain well-defined respects is the law of the whole, and of each of its parts. Such a church includes in its congregation more or less of persons who are unconverted, and is in immediate contact with portions of the world who may be savingly affected through this agency. Now as Zion was the seat and the symbol of the ancient religion, and as the Temple was the most sacred spot in Zion as a city, and where the outward rites of that religion were celebrated, so without any far-fetched figure we may say that the meeting-house, the church-edifice, is the Zion, the home of this individual Church. There God's people meet to worship him, to hear the Gospel preached, and to sing the high praises of Jehovah; there they meet to remember Christ in the ordinance of his own appointment, and to receive those blessed impulses which are so effectual in helping them on to a meeting with the general assembly and Church of the first-born, who are written in heaven. It is the place of which the believer says: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord: My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. . . . I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness!" (Ps. 84: 1, 2, 10.) Indeed, as the seat and home of those heaven-ordained agencies by which sinners are regenerated, the Church where God's people meet may not inaptly

be described in the language of the text: "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man were born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her." I propose to discourse to you at this time concerning the CHURCH AS THE BIRTHPLACE OF SOULS. And in the first place let me discuss that great event called the soul's birth.

Literal birth is the beginning of a new existence, designed to be one of expanding strength and happiness. As contrasted either with non-existence or annihilation, existence is regarded as very desirable. Except under the coërcion of remorse, or of some other intolerable anguish, no one wishes he had never been born, or that he may be forever blotted out of existence. Birth is the beginning of this state universally regarded as desirable. It is true, it is a period of helpless weakness and dependence, yet if not hindered by some misfortune, that feeble beginning may be developed into the manly beauty of David or the brawny force of Hercules.

There is a sense in which the natural birth is to be regarded as an event of the highest importance, because in the present condition of things it is not only the beginning of physical existence, but the necessary condition of the intellectual and moral birth. Of the happiness which the natural birth brings to parents, to society, and the new-born, I need not now speak.

But there is such an event as intellectual birth, which, in itself, is nobler and more important than the physical. When the mind begins to open, so as to apprehend the simplest ideas, in a sense that mind experiences a birth, which is the beginning of a new existence. Each new idea acquired, all fresh combinations of old elements into new forms of thought, each addition of strength enabling the mind to mount up as on eagle's wings, running without weariness, and walking without faintness, until it aspires to companionship with Plato and Bacon, is but the development of that existence to which the intellectual birth introduced it.

It is also true of certain persons that they have lived for years in a sort of perfunctory intellectual way; their reason has been either reluctant or languid, their perceptions dull, their imagination leaden-winged, and their mental appetite sickly, when by contact with some gifted mind, or some learned institution, or some exigency requiring forces and faculties, the very existence of which they have been hitherto profoundly ignorant, they have experienced an intellectual regeneration as marvelous as the blind man experienced when Jesus anointed his eyes. Faculties and energies and aspirations, as by magic, come to light, scarcely more to the surprise of others than themselves. With this, often comes light on the vexed question of a pursuit in life. The man who has vainly tried to master the law finds suddenly his life-work to be in the beautiful proportions and fitnesses of architecture; the plain Oliver Cromwell finds that plows and soils and fruits and stocks are not his

business, but the leading of armies and the management of a kingdom; and the law-student at Gamaliel's feet finds that his work is not merely to preach the faith he once destroyed, but with his peerless pen to give that faith its proper dogmatic statements and logical defenses.

In innumerable cases, men have experienced this marvelous intellectual change, which has made them a wonder to themselves and to others, and this change is most significantly hinted in that flash of genius which we have in the indorsement which a celebrated modern author wrote on the title-page of some manuscripts composed when he was young: "The follies that I committed before my birth."

The vast results dependent on this intellectual birth, whether in the simple form first stated, or in the latter more imposing form, are evident at a glance, and shall not delay us a moment in their exposition. Mounting by a natural gradation, we come to that moral change which our blessed Lord compared to birth, or rather, which, by an impressive metaphor, he called birth from above. This is the "new birth," which holds so prominent a place in evangelical theology. The very words of Jesus to Nicodemus, and the circumstances in which he spoke, show how important he regarded the change: "Verily, verily I say unto you, except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." "Marvel not, that I said unto you, ye must be born again."

What is this new birth? Not the imparting any new physical, mental, or moral faculties to the sinner. After the new birth, the sinner has the same limbs, the same senses, the same body he had before. His perceptive powers, his ability to reason, and from admitted facts to derive new truths; his imagination, so important in its relation to the conception and practical power of truth; in a word, his intellect is just what it was before. The same is true of his moral nature. His sensibilities, not merely natural, but moral, making him susceptible of the feelings of approbation and disapprobation, and consequently of the feelings of moral obligation, are not changed. Before the new birth he had a conscience, which, in greater or less power, praised him when he did right, thus making him happy, and reprobated him when he did wrong, thus making him unhappy. Before the new birth, the sinner had the power of choice; he was not shut up by an unavoidable necessity to choose only one thing or one way, and that the wrong one. There was no wrong choice he ever made in his life, when he was not conscious that he had the ability, and was therefore under the most positive obligation to make a right choice.

Nor yet is this new birth a formal union of the sinner with the Christian Church by baptism. Judas was undoubtedly baptized, yet Jesus said of him to his disciples: "One of you is a devil." (John 6: 70.) Simon Magus also was in proper form introduced

into the Church by baptism at the hands of Philip, and yet Peter said to this baptized man: "Thy heart is not right in the sight of God." (Acts 8: 13, 21.) Both these bad men were baptized in due form, and yet neither one after baptism had experienced the new birth. And alas! how many like them have enjoyed all the privileges of Christ's visible Church, and yet neither in the judgment of charity nor of themselves is there any evidence of their having experienced that surprising and necessary change spoken of by our blessed Lord as the new birth!

What then *is* the new birth? Previous to this change the soul is destitute of the supreme love of God as a controlling motive of life. God says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" but man by nature refuses obedience to this command. The love of self takes throne which belongs only to the love of God. He loves self supremely, but "God is not in all his thoughts." He plans for himself, thinks for himself, works for himself, lives for himself, as a supreme reason, utterly banishing, as that supreme reason of life, the love he owes to God. Out of this wicked heart, estranged from God, flow our wicked thoughts and vile affections and depraved actions.

The new birth consists in exorcising the heart of self as a supreme motive of life, and enthroning therein the love of God. In a word, the new birth is the birth of supreme love to God in the sinner's heart, so that now he shall aspire perhaps feebly, but really to the fulfillment of the command, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God;" or rather to the original command: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." This change in the governing motive of the soul penetrates and pervades the entire moral nature, and indirectly the mental and even the physical powers. The latter, up to this point, have been the servants of sin; they now become the instruments of righteousness. The body ceases to be a temple of Satan, and becomes a temple of the Holy Ghost. The mental faculties are so clarified that they now perceive the truths to which hitherto they were blind, and they become an instrumental agency through which motive kindles the moral sensibilities into a glow, and arouses the feeling of obligation into a force which the Apostle well describes: "The love of Christ constraineth us." The soul's affections are rectified, purified, and strengthened. The will is also inclined to choose the right way; the fear as well as the love of the Lord presses upon it to make in all things a right choice especially, the great, generic choice of enthroning the love of God in the heart as its supreme motive. In a word, the new birth effects such a change in the moral nature, that its subject, with more or less confidence, is able to say of God, whom he loves supremely: "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon the earth whom I desire besides thee." Such is that birth of the soul to which the

Psalmist refers in the text: "And of Zion it shall be said, This and hat man was born in her."

In the second place, let me remark the soul's new birth is the greatest work ever effected among men, even by the Almighty. I desire not to speak extravagantly, and therefore you will indulge me in the attempt to justify the statement, which amounts to this, that God's grandest work among men is the conversion of a wicked soul into a good soul. The creative power of God transcends our conception. The statement in the Bible, "Let there be light," was pronounced by an ancient critic to be one of the most sublime ever made. Suppose one had been with God when from nothing he evoked the creation which we now see; above, beneath, on every side was space, in which brooded nayless darkness. There was not an atom of matter, not a single, simple element, not a ray of light. It was empty space. When man would build a house, however humble it may be, he must gather his materials from the quarry, the clay-bed, the iron mine, and the forest. Man can not create. He can only put into new forms materials ready to his hand. The inventor of some new power or machine is not its creator. He, by careful observation, detects some principle so obvious that we wonder how it could have eluded the observation of men so long. The man of genius whom we laud uses facts and forces which were about him, but he can not create an atom of dirt, or a pin, or a rain-drop. When we thus by the creative standard measure man, he sinks to utter nothingness. God gathered no materials from the hidden stores of other systems with which to build this. The poet finely renders this matter:

> "Nature, whence sprang thy glorious frame?
> My Maker called me, and I came."

How sublime the account! "God created the heaven and the earth;" "Let there be light;" "Let there be a firmament;" "Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven." Here was creative power. In the midst of empty space, God says, "Let there be," and light flashes through the darkness; the sun is placed in the midst of the firmament; the earth and the stars, the plants and the animals, all come forth. "Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord, my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty; who coverest thyself with light as with a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain; who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds his chariots; who walketh upon the wings of the wind; who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flame of fire; who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever." I do not underrate God's work in creation in saying this was an effort of omnipotence, put forth to realize, in a material universe, the plan which infinite wisdom had devised. The least of God's works excite our

wonder, as much, perhaps, as the greatest. We gaze in speechless admiration upon the prairies, spread out like a limitless ocean, or on the mountains, which have been piled up in their sublime majesty; yet with scarcely less admiration do we behold the little flower or the wing of the least insect. The telescope and the microscope, opening to our gaze "the magnitudes" of the universe, do but testify to the greatness of the Creator.

And yet this is almightiness in a domain where there is no obstacle. Here by "the word of his power" all things are made. Not so in that work which God had to do when he undertook to convert a wicked soul into a good one; a human soul, now a Satan's temple, into one fit to be a temple of the Holy Ghost. Here mere omnipotence is out of its proper sphere, since the work to be done is to make an unwilling soul a willing one, a condemned soul a pardoned one. Here the Almighty can not say, "Let it be done," as when creating the heaven and the earth; justice, eternal and immutable, forbids it. It points to the law which has been transgressed by the sinner, and to the declaration of Him who can not lie: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Justice, with uplifted sword and with brow made terrible by frowns deep as the shadows of death, demands how even God, with all his omnipotence, can justify the sinner? We see at once that the problem of creating a world is as nothing in its difficulties compared with that of the new creating a wicked soul. But grant that justice can be satisfied by some expedient which shall preserve God's law and honor immaculate, how is God to overcome the sinner's hostility to him? "The carnal mind is enmity to God; it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." God by an act of power can annihilate the sinner; but can he compel the sinner full of enmity to love him? And thus the entire work of the soul's new birth is environed with the most formidable difficulties, in comparison with which all acts of mere omnipotence sink into insignificance. But oh! how glorious it is when done! because then a wicked soul becomes a good one, a pernicious soul a useful one, an ugly soul a beautiful one, a defiled soul a clean one, a wretched soul a happy one, a hateful soul a lovely one, a dead soul one that is alive, a soul that is an heir of hell an heir of heaven; in a word, a soul which was doomed to an eternal damnation into one that is beatified with an eternal salvation.

Hence, I reiterate the assertion that the soul's new birth is the greatest as well as most glorious of all the works effected among men even by the Almighty God.

Let me, in the third place, remark on the means by which God effects this greatest of his works.

The answer to this question of means also illustrates the topic just considered, but for the sake of distinctness, we will consider the means by themselves. They belong to two great classes — the di-

vine and the human. The former includes each person of the adorable Trinity. Let me state this matter in heaven's own rhetoric. God the Father is to be included as one of the forces or agents, producing the soul's new birth, for "God so loved the world," etc. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is said to have begotten the Christian into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

God the Son is also an agent in the same wonderful and difficult work. He undertook in himself to solve the problem of human redemption. He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. He became in all respects a man, and in that condition suffered what the sinner deserved. God punished him as a sinner because he had taken the sinner's place. God loved and saved the sinner as though he were righteous, because, while Christ had taken his place, the sinner had in this respect taken Christ's place. It was a double imputation of the sinner's guilt to Christ, and Christ's righteousness to the sinner; a double interchange of reward and penalty, the infliction of the sinner's penalty on Christ, and the bestowment of Christ's reward on the sinner. So it is written by the Holy Ghost: "Who hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

This is the "Christ crucified" of whose office the Apostle makes so much; this is the grand and, so far as we are informed, the only means by which it is possible for the sinful soul to experience the new birth; and the means illustrate, in the most startling manner, both the difficulty and the glory of the achievement.

God the Spirit is also an agent in this work. Our Lord represents this means as essential, and the Apostles are unanimous in declaring that as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, and because of this, men are warned not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God. The sinner is awakened, converted, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit; the dead sinner is made alive by the Holy Spirit; the wicked soul is renewed into a good soul by the Holy Spirit.

This presents the divine part of the means employed in the soul's new birth. Let us now look at the human. It is summed up in the preaching of "Christ and him crucified." This general statement is divisible into many included particulars, of which we have not time to speak. Hence, when our Lord had finished his work, and would make it effective in the salvation of sinners, he said to his Apostles: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Hence, the Apostle declares it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe; and further, this is the reason why he said: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to every one that believeth."

Behold the means of the soul's new birth! Men, compared to earthen vessels, have this treasure committed to them, and they are commanded to preach to sinners a gospel which tells them how God the Father loved them, how God the Son died for them, and how God the Spirit renews them. Men who themselves have experienced this new birth, are to go to sinners with such a gospel; they are to be in earnest; they are to entreat sinners, to teach sinners, to warn sinners, and to win sinners, even as the greatest of preachers did, with argument, appeal, holy guide, tears, eloquence, even as he himself said: "I am made all things unto all men that I might by all means save some."

In the fourth place, the Psalmist gives this most glorious and difficult achievement which we have been discussing a local habitation: "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her."

The birthplace of great men and great deeds has ever been a matter of lively interest. Twelve cities contended for the honor of being the place of Homer's nativity. How eagerly do we consult the books to learn where this and that great man was born! With what a thrill of emotion do we say, here is the place where Magna Charta was given to the barons; or, in this place was passed our Declaration of Independence; or, in this was fought the critical battle of the Revolution! This sacredness of place was the main element of that enthusiasm which produced the Crusades; and what think you must be the feelings of the traveler as for the first time he looks on Zion, the city of the great King, and the memories of the men and the deeds which haunt the locality come trooping upon him! and especially as he thinks of the Man of Sorrows!

No one can think of his own birthplace with indifference. Now that surprising change, the soul's new birth, may literally take place in the home where family piety dwells, or in the field, or shop, or study, where industry toils, or in the crowded thoroughfare, or in some place of seclusion where the anxious spirit is meditating on the most momentous of all questions: "What must I do to be saved?" Very sacred are these natal spots of the soul—they can never fade from our memory or our love!

But there is a sense in which the Church is the soul's birthplace. As an instrumentality, the preaching of the Gospel is heaven's chief agency in effecting individual and social regeneration. Pious individuals do not produce the preaching of the Gospel, but instrumentally the preaching of the Gospel produces the pious individuals. The Church is not the first in the order of time and the preaching second, but exactly the reverse. Thus in primitive times the Apostles preached, and, as a consequence, churches sprang into existence. Now it is true there is such a thing as preaching from house to house, and in private to single persons,

but the idea of preaching as a permanent agency is associated principally with a place set apart to that exercise.

There are two distinct views of the house of worship. The first regards it as a place for seeing certain ceremonies which are performed in the presence of the congregation—this is the Roman Catholic idea. The other regards the house of worship as a place in which people both worship the Lord and hear his words. In the Jewish economy the temple was the place for the sacrifices and rites; the synagogue the place in which the people heard the Scriptures read and expounded. The Protestant idea of a house of worship combines the temple and the synagogue. There the most solemn rites of religion are performed — baptism and the Lord's Supper; and there in the highest sense the Gospel is preached not before the people, but to them. There the word of God is read, the law unfolded, the fundamental facts in man's moral condition stated and proved; there is proclaimed God's holiness as a moral governor, and man's total sinfulness as a moral being; there is proclaimed not only man's sinfulness, but God's amazing mercy and the cost of its exercise; there are proclaimed the love and compassion of Christ, and his entreaties to sinners to be saved; there Sinai is unvailed in all its appalling terrors and Calvary in all its entrancing loveliness; there is depicted with tearful and solicitous tenderness the perdition of ungodly men and the rest which remaineth for the people of God; in one word, there, in the Christian meeting-house or church, is preached, in all its length, and breadth, and hight, and depth, the love of God to sinners, as presented in a Gospel the central fact of which is Christ crucified. This is the place in which the Gospel peculiarly is preached, the place which is the seat or home of all those instrumental agencies by which God effects the soul's new birth. Here the terrors of the the law scare men; here the love of the Gospel woos them; here they cry out, "What must we do?" and here they cast themselves on an all-sufficient Saviour in all the raptures of a new love, a new faith, a new life; here they avouch the Lord to be their God in a profession of their allegiance to Christ as their King; here they are baptized, and here they remember Jesus in the ordinance of his appointment, with unaffected sensibility partaking of the emblems which represent his broken body and shed blood; here they lavish their love on those who love Christ and one another; here they gather strength for conflict and comfort for trial; here they mature their graces, until hope becomes fruition and faith is lost in the expected reality; here they come in the strength of manhood, as the sun mounts up to midday to gain energy for toil and for conflict; and here they come in the weakness of age, as the sun declines to its settings; here usually is the last place we see them in life, lingering at this sacred shrine with a fondness akin to that which the pilgrim feels as he is leaving his home for the last time; and here

we bid farewell to their remains which we are about to lay away until the resurrection. In brief, the Church is the Christian's spiritual birthplace and that of his children, the seat of those mighty instrumentalities through which sinners are led to God; the Church is the soul's birthplace, from which again and again, in never-ceasing repetition, the news goes up to the angels, who make heaven resound with their joy: He that was lost is found, he that was dead is alive. Hence the gladness, the hope, the gratitude with which we repeat the words: "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her."

Thus we see how it is that the Church is the birthplace of souls, and this also imparts such thrilling interest to the act of dedicating a church-edifice to the worship of God. Such a house thenceforth becomes our spiritual home, our Zion. But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens can not contain him, how much less these houses which we build! (2 Chron. 6 : 18.) "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" (Isa. 66 : 1.) A poor and a contrite spirit is God's special temple, and yet he loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. What condescension it is that the Eternal Jehovah, the King of glory, should be willing to dwell in humble tabernacles which his people in reverence build for him! And as we think of his glory and power and dignity and holiness as the great God and the great King, well may we exclaim in the language of devout ecstasy: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." (Ps. 24 : 7–10.) Such an house thenceforth becomes the house of the Lord, built and dedicated not for the celebration of ostentatious rites and pompous ceremonies, but as a holy place in which the great congregation may meet to offer their supplications and sing their psalms of praise to the Lord their God, their Father, their Redeemer, and their Sanctifier; a holy place in which may be published a full, free, and infinitely glorious Gospel; a holy place in which sinners shall be visited with the power of a new Pentecost, wringing from them the cry, "What must we do?" a holy place in which, by the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, awakened sinners shall be renewed, so that the Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man, yea, multitudes of men, were born there; a holy place in which God's little ones shall be trained for glory and his children shall be instructed, warned,

strengthened, comforted, and prepared to ascend to the temple of which Solomon's, that

"Mount of snow,
Fretted with golden pinnacles,"

was only a very faint type; a holy place which, as the years roll away, shall gather about its pulpit, and its communion-board, and its aisles, and its every pew, the tenderest and holiest associations of sinners here converted, saints here edified; of gracious displays of the divine power here made, of loved ones who once worshiped God here, and hence were rapt out of our sight to the world where the wicked cease from troubling and where the weary be at rest.

"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only true God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

SERMON VIII.

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CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—MATT. 5: 48.

IF we were to ask what is this perfection, and should undertake to answer the inquiry by the highest light of natural religion, we should say: It is the perfection of love. Obscure as are many of the intimations which nature furnishes respecting its Author, they are yet sufficiently clear to indicate his goodness as his crowning glory. The wisdom and power which shine so resplendently in the natural creation, and the righteousness and holiness which have such impressive displays in the history of men, are but the expressions of love. In like manner the Bible points us, with only greater clearness, in the same direction. The remarkable prayer of Moses—I beseech thee, show me thy glory—the Lord answers by making all his goodness pass before his servant. "And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee." "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." All these, whether the mercy that can pardon or the justice which must punish, are alike expressions of divine love. The goodness is the

central sun, and all the rest are rays to which it gives their light and glory.

So also in the New Testament, that which harmonizes and explains all other representations of the glory of God is the inspired statement of the Apostle: "God is love." But that this is the kind of perfection which our Saviour enjoins in the text is evident also upon other grounds. No other meaning would form a fitting conclusion to the argument of the preceding verses. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them which persecute you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them who love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The force of this "therefore," in its connection with the preceding passage, clearly indicates what kind of a perfection is here implied. Be ye therefore perfect—that is, perfect in this respect, perfect in love, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect in love.

But that assurance might be rendered even more than doubly sure, we have, in the Gospel according to Luke, (6 : 36,) the conclusion of this same portion of the Sermon on the Mount, stated in these words: "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." There is no difference of meaning in the two expressions. The "perfection" of Matthew, and the "mercy" of Luke, are one and the same. They are each the perfection of love.

The text therefore means as though we should read it: "Be ye therefore love, even as your Father which is in heaven is love." But this does not explain the text. It only exchanges one word for another. We must gain the meaning of love in order to attain the full force of this injunction.

What then is love?—a word most easy to our lips, but most difficult to our apprehension. Perhaps of all the words we are every day employing, there is none which has a greater difficulty of meaning than this. We shall be aided, however, in discovering it, by some terms of kindred origin. Love and life and liberty are words which form only different branches from the same root, and express radically only different forms of the same idea. Let us seek therefore the meaning of life and of liberty, in order that we may find more widely and deeply the meaning of love. What then is life?

1. The first and most obvious conception of life is that of a power which unites many things into one. Behold the multitude

[illegible] unity [illegible] many, and yet [illegible] because I am not the [illegible] because I am not [illegible] and last many [illegible] many being many, are [illegible] the most perfect sort, but [illegible] No mechani- [illegible] their various combinations, [illegible] unrivaled [illegible] been thought a [illegible] which brings the diverse [illegible] me. This is the working of [illegible] law of love. Love is the [illegible] souls into union. However [illegible] mixed and harmonised by [illegible] parts of a living structure are [illegible] which makes them alive. A soul that [illegible] with the object of its love. A [illegible] held together in a unity as pow- [illegible] as is love. Behold two souls, a [illegible] and is there any other union so [illegible] Nay my brethren, is there any other union at [illegible] worthy of the name? I know there are part- [illegible] mechanisms of common pursuits or congenial tastes, but any such tie is as different from that which is made perfect by love, as the cord which binds up the sticks of a dead fagot differs from the force which unites the branches of a living tree. There is no union among human souls, except where they love one another, and where love is complete there is no diversity. The life which holds in unity the different parts of an organic structure is therefore but the type of the love which can join different souls together in a union as perfect as is the love.

2. But life is something more than this, and so also is love. In a living organism each part is at the same time the means and the end of all the rest. That vital principle which has united them in one body, gives to each one of its numberless parts a perfect [illegible] with every other. Every leaf, and branch, and root, and [illegible] living tree is working for each other one with all its [illegible] the constant means or instrument [illegible] perfection, [illegible] others join in paying it their [illegible] though it [illegible] or object of their activi[illegible] working [illegible] cisely so also of love [illegible] seek that other's w[illegible] tioned t[illegible] com[illegible] fo[illegible]

Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored, all the members rejoice together. In just the degree in which this state of communion or organic fellowship is wanting among men, is there a lack of love. We do not, can not love the soul whose well-being we are not seeking to subserve. We are not, can not be in true communion with the family or the church, or whatever association into which we come, unless each heart, with ceaseless throbbings, is pouring forth the currents of its life, for the sake of every other member. The life, therefore, which unites the different parts of an organic body, so that the eye can not say unto the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you, is again but the type of the love which alone can truly organize society and make of human souls a fellowship wherein the welfare of each is the common interest of all.

3. But the most literal, and perhaps also the most characteristic meaning of life, is an inner energy which is constantly passing onward and reaching toward an end or consummation. Life is that which is always leaving the present, and ever advancing into the future. This is what is meant by the growth of a living thing. It passes away from its present condition into a more mature one; it leaves its state of to-day for the more advanced state where we find it to-morrow. The shrub grows till it becomes a tree. The child passes away from his childhood, and becomes a man. And this passing forward into the future, this reaching toward something different from what it has yet attained, is always seen in life up to the last point where we can trace it. The plant which dies, as we say, in its maturity, has ripened the seeds upon whose wings its living power can still pass onward, away from itself or its present being into the future. And the man who dies in old age is conscious of something within him which is still, as it ever has been, looking forward and reaching unto something yet beyond. This, I say, is the literal and perhaps the most characteristic meaning of life, and the literal meaning of love is precisely the same. Love is the passing outward and the reaching forward of one unto another. When it enters a soul, it will never suffer that soul to rest in or upon itself. Love is a power which fills the soul only that this fullness may be poured out upon some other object, toward which the soul is ever going forth in self-forgetfulness or self-devotion. As life never rests, but as the living being passes on continually from infancy to youth and mature age, and as even in its maturity there is still the reaching forward unto that which is beyond, so love is ever active, and the loving soul presses away toward the object of its love, tirelessly seeking that other's good and not its own, never resting until, like the dove upon the ark, it has ceased to poise itself upon its own pinions, and has found in something other than itself security and peace. Thus, as before, do we see that life is but

the representative of love, and thus in this, the highest conception we can form of life, we may say again, that love is life.

II. But though we have thus exhausted the conception of life, we have not yet attained the full meaning of love, for love is not only life, but liberty. What then is liberty? Liberty, in its most literal sense, is the power to pass away from self. The brute never can possess it. The law of his highest happiness, the impulse to go wherever the craving of appetite leads, controls him inevitably, according to the end of his own self-gratification. And man, in so far as he possesses a nature kindred to the brute, is no more free from a necessity in all his actions than is the bird or beast or creeping thing. Unless he has in his rational endowment something altogether different from a fleshy nature, unless there be something higher than happiness which he can seek, and something better than self-gratification which he can find, unless there be in self-denial a true alternative to self-indulgence, and he has the power of choice and action in respect of these, he has no freedom. For liberty of the will is just this power, the power of voluntary self-forgetfulness, and he is freest who can forget himself the most. Must not this be so? Am I really free, unless possessing the ability to deny as truly as to please myself? Is it liberty which must go only in the way in which our self-seeking impulses would guide us? Then, wherein has man more liberty than the brute? No, my brethren. Am I free to obey the highest law that can be laid upon me, the law of the Divine Master, that I take up my cross and follow him, unless I have the power to bear the cross, even as he also bore it, and be myself lifted up upon it as was also he? Is it liberty which makes such a mandate irksome? Is it the power of our freedom whereby we shrink from rendering it entire obedience? Nay, but does not all this fear and pain spring simply from the bondage wherein we are enslaved to self? If there were no fetters of selfish lust upon us, would the command to crucify the self be grievous? And if these fetters could be broken off, would not this be the true emancipation for the soul? The divine and perfect law demands the entire surrender of the self to God. This is alike the highest claim that can be made and the least service that can be accepted. But the power to render this obedience without constraint or sense of irksomeness, the power to give up self, not merely in uncomplaining, but in joyous self-devotion, what is this but the power of perfect freedom, the liberty for which the captive soul was made, and unto which, though bound by many fetters, it doth yet aspire?

This power of true self-forgetfulness in which genuine liberty consists, gives us a still wider view of love, for love is just this power. Nothing else, no law nor sense of obligation, can ever lead the soul to disregard self-interest, and yield itself in any way a contribution for another's good. But the work is easy for love. This is

love, its fullness, its blessedness, when the heart sends forth its currents of beneficence, not to have the streams return again, after many windings, to pour their fullness into the source which gave them birth, but which rejoices most of all in their returnless goings forth, knowing that it has within an exhaustless fountain welling up to everlasting life and liberty, because to everlasting love.

Such is love, in the highest apprehension we can attain respecting it, and that this is our true perfection, may most clearly appear. For whence comes the sense of imperfection, but from the want of love? When do we ever feel ashamed or degraded, but when some form of self-seeking, rather than of self-surrender, has been chosen? And when do we have the sense of royal dignity most gloriously, save when the foot is planted firmly on the neck of the vanquished self, and the freed spirit knows its freedom?

Love is our perfection, because it is our life and liberty. What a weary round we tread in all our duties; the law of the members warring against the law of the mind, and the body of death threatening to crush us, all because we are lacking in love! How hard it is to obey the divine mandate, how we shrink and strive to evade it, but how easy this would be, if we were only made living and free in love! "I will run in the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."

Would it not make a wonderful difference with these duties which now so greatly harass us, if they could all be done in love? "Love is the fulfilling of the law." We can yield our wills in perfect loyalty to the divine commands, just when our hearts can beat responsively to God's love. If we can only look upward, and answer back his smile of love, as face answereth to face in a glass, it becomes no longer hard to do his will; tribulations or distresses for his sake cease to be a burden; there is no secret wish that the law should relax aught of its stern requirements, for the love has brought the law and the liberty into true accord, in the soul's perfect life. Be ye therefore love, even as your Father which is in heaven is love, for love is your perfection, even as it is his.

Does this seem altogether beyond our reach? Do we say it is high, we can not attain unto it? And yet we long for it. Down deep in every Christian soul burns the ceaseless aspiration for just this perfection. And is it not true, that the more we feel the want of it, and the greater the difficulty seems in the way of its attainment, so much the more do we yearn for its undisturbed possession? And can this yearning ever be filled and satisfied? May the dead heart be made alive, and the enslaved will emancipated, and the selfish soul become inspired with love? To the deep Christian experience, no question is so vital as this. Oh! that I knew where I might find this perfection, that I might come even to its seat, we say; but we grope for it in the darkness, groaning and travailing in pain together, and the groping and the groaning are all we seem to find. Oh! that

I had wings like a dove, that I might fly to such a blessed state, we exclaim; but the wings are wanting, and the weary feet clinging to earth can not bear us away. But still we do not give it over. We add our efforts to our aspirations. We pile up duties mountains high, and with toilsome step ascend the summit, seeking thus for power to leave the earth's attractions, and finding only that these attractions are just as binding here as they were before. The selfish soul is selfish still, notwithstanding all its duties, and yet it mysteriously clings to these, with unfailing eagerness and hope, after all their failures to release it. We know, and yet we all the time forget that our duties are dead, and our efforts are not free, while life and liberty are the very blessings which we seek to gain by these. What a transformation would be wrought in all our activity if it were only inspired by love, and yet how helpless all this activity is to gain for itself this inspiration! But the text aids us here, even by its seeming difficulty. If we are commanded to be perfect even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect, we may obey the command even because he is perfect. His perfection is the source of ours. His love gives us our love and life and liberty. We love him, says the Apostle John, because he first loved us. That which is impossible to man is possible to God. While the selfish soul can not warm itself into love, the light of God's shining upon it can kindle it abundantly unto a perfect life. All our selfishness, all our bondage, all remains of the body of death may be removed, when God's love shall be revealed. We shall be like him when we shall see him as he is, and because we shall see him as he is.

Behold the certainty of this result when God manifests his love in the Person and the works of his well-beloved Son. For see, what is the meaning of this amazing story of divine condescension and sacrifice? Why did he who was so rich become so poor? Why should adoring angels gaze upon their Lord coming forth from the throne and stooping in infinite humiliation to a subject's place? Why is that life so full of sorrow which is so free from sin? What makes that heart so solitary where such deep and tender sympathies abound? Why is he such a lowly, wandering outcast, one in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and whose every word and work was penetrated with a majesty so truly divine? Why that unutterable agony in the garden, that bitter ignominy in the council-hall—the mock trial, the buffeting and reviling, the bended knee and purple robe and crown of thorns? Why that crucifixion scene which the sun refused to look upon, and at which the very earth quaked as though in terror, when He whose rightful place was the throne of glory hung expiring upon the cross of shame? Truly, we exclaim with the centurion, truly this was the Son of God. But why was all this? And when the answer comes, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life—when we learn that he who was so rich became poor, in order that we through his poverty might become rich; when we see that all this stupendous sacrifice was not to increase the blessedness of Him who made it, but solely to raise to eternal life those for whom it was made; when we come to know something of the hight and depth and length and breadth of the love of God which passeth knowledge, then it is that we become filled with all the fullness of God, and find a power within us hitherto unknown to will and to do of his good pleasure. When we ask of what need was this little world to Him who hath made Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South, and of what consequence this feeble race to Him to whom the thousand thousands minister, and before whom ten thousand times ten thousand stand, of angels who excel in strength and hearken unto the voice of his word; when we learn our own defilement, our want of love and purity, our fullness of guilt and sin and shame, and ask what are we that Christ should be mindful of us, and then realize that in all our weakness and worthlessness he loved us and gave himself through bitter shame and sorrow to die for us, there is a power in this love which we can not overcome. It overcomes us. It melts, it subdues and kindles within us something in its own likeness. We can stand out against the law, we can resist every commandment, and have done it, though we have known that they were true and righteous altogether; but who can resist the power of the love of the Son of God? Does not love always seek and secure its counterpart? Who can steel himself even against human love? Let it be pure and devoted, self-renouncing and self-forgetting, and where is the heart which can bar itself from its approach and refuse to respond to it with kindred affection? I have only to know, even among human relations, that there is one heart that loves me so deeply that it would give up its dearest interests for my good, and though I have scorned and hated and bitterly injured it hitherto, its love shall fill me with self-reproaches, with penitence, with confession, with gratitude, with love. And this is something I can neither choose nor refuse. It goes deeper than my will, and makes me willing in the day of its power. And thus when the Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto men; when he awakens in any man the clear consciousness that Christ died not simply for the race, but for him, as truly for him as though he stood alone the only object of the great redemption—this individualizing sense of Christ's work, this self-appropriation of the fullness of his love—what is this but faith, the gift of God, which worketh by love, which purifies and thus renews the heart? Faith is as inseparable from love as the light from the warmth of a sunbeam. It is not then any strange or abitrary condition set to the reception of the Gospel blessings, but the true and only way in which the life of the Gospel could

enter and dwell within us. This is eternal life, said the Saviour, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; eternal life, because it is the knowledge of eternal love, which when we gaze upon it changes us into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.

It may be that we can not explain in any words beyond the simple statement of the fact, how this is wrought. "The kingdom of God is as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow up, he knoweth not how." We can not tell how it is that the linen spread out beneath the sunlight whitens to the likeness of the light that falls upon it—neither do we know how the soul becomes radiant like the glory which fills its raptured vision, but, in either case, the undimmed sun, shining in the greatness of His strength, works the transformation. And can we do aught but bare our breasts unto this sunlight and say: Shine upon us, O Sun, with healing in thy beams; pour upon us richly thy divine effulgence; we wait and sigh for thine uprising?

The means of grace, therefore, without which every other means is useless, is a contemplation of God. We must seek to know more of him, if we would grow more into his likeness. The prayer of Moses—I beseech thee show me thy glory—is the universal prayer of the earnest Christian heart. The answer to it comprehends all other spiritual blessings. Strength to do or to suffer the divine will, zeal and earnestness and glowing joy in the Christian life, faith and hope and charity, all flow from this. No heart is cold which fully knows that God loves it and that Christ has died for it. No soul can keep its selfishness which feels itself the immediate object of divine and eternal love. We are thus to seek this knowledge till we shall clearly and completely gain it. That which we at first receive by faith, and grasp dimly, as God reveals it to us, but for which we can not see the reason, ought to be treasured up so closely and pondered on so well, that it should become no longer faith, but knowledge—no longer a truth whose source is hid, whose basis is beyond our reach, but one whose very ground is clearly seen and firmly rested on. It ought not to seem strange to us that God loves us. We should rise—and we may—from the first vague faith of the babe in Christ to the completed knowledge of the matured experience, which sees a sufficient reason for God's love in God himself. "It is just like him," said an old, converted heathen woman, to whom God had revealed himself so intimately and with such surpassing glory, that the highest statements made respecting him gave her no surprise. And so clear a knowledge and intimate a communion with God ought to be so fully our possession that when he shall lead us on from grace to [redacted] and from one degree of glorious manifestation to another, [redacted]hall be seen to be in each preceding step a preparation for

that which was to come, and we can look up to him, exclaiming: Thou knowest, O Father, that we did not doubt thy love and all-sufficiency, for thou hast given us copious prelibations of this feast, full foreshinings of this glory, in which our joy has been, as it still so deeply is, unspeakable and full of glory. Thus do we "come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we, henceforth, be no more children."

This knowledge of God is our greatest boon, and we are to seek to know him, that we may know him. But the way is not so difficult, nor the distance so remote, as many of our unbelieving thoughts and ways would indicate. "For this commandment, which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayst do it." God is very near to that soul to which his Spirit has taken and made known the things of Christ. God must be near to the soul that he loves. If that soul, once enkindled by his love, to whom, in the joy of its first espousals, it yielded in glad and spontaneous embrace, has been chilled by returning selfishness, and finds that the lusts which it thought were vanquished are seeking again for dominion, God has not left its side, though it has turned away its face from him. He waits, he watches over it, and yearns for the averted eyes again to turn and meet his own. In the night, and while the soul is sleeping, he knocks, and whispers: "Open to me, my sister, my love, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." He is ever more desirous to give us his gracious manifestations than we are willing to receive them. It is his glory to be good. We express his eternal excellency when we say that he is love; and we are filled with all his fullness when we know the hight and depth and length and breadth of his love, which passeth knowledge.

I said, at the outset of the discourse, that it is difficult fully to recognize the conception of love, and it is just this difficulty which makes it so hard to realize the application of God's love to us. We are so selfish, so certain to set a price upon our gifts, that we hesitate before we receive the inestimable boon of the divine love, without money and without price. And if we have received it, and been quickened at all by its throbbings, we instinctively cloud the apprehension of it, and suffer the currents of the new life to grow slack, while we seek in something which we can do for a requital of it. But the love of God would not be love, if it could be recompensed otherwise than in the blessedness of its

all-sufficient exercise. And we dim its glory just so far as we undertake to repay it. It is not in what we return, but in what we receive, that the love of God finds its eternal joy. And all the activity of holy devotion, to which his love kindles us, is directed by him, and is well pleasing to him, only because it deepens our capacity to receive him, and widens the channels through which he can pour his fullness upon us.

Yes, my brethren, we must keep out the notion, although it strives to enter in every moment, that any toil, or sacrifice, or self-devotion, unto which he calls us, is to be given in payment for love which we have already received, or to purchase still more which we hope to obtain. The love is freely given, and freely it must be received. All those works of Christian enterprise whereby a loving Church seeks to spread abroad the glory of the Lord she loves, make the Church more sensible of this glory—open her eye more clearly to behold it, and render her heart more ready to receive its more abundant displays; and this is why they are commanded. Does he need the service? Has he not the troops of lofty ones, in all places of his dominion, that do his pleasure—the ministering spirits which excel in strength, and hearken unto the voice of his word—and does he need our service? Nay, is not the residue of the Spirit with him, and has he to do aught but to blow with his breath upon the dry bones, and they shall come again together, and sinews and flesh shall clothe them, and they shall stand up with new bodies and a new life, an exceeding great army, and does he need any thing that we can do? Oh! no, but we need it perishingly. We can not grow without this service. It is the way in which he blesses us, the process by which he educates us, and the means whereby we grow unto a more interior fellowship with him. God's sovereignty is not for his own sake, but for ours. He did not need a throne or scepter, but he could not pour on us his love, except as he made us subject unto him. And the more we realize this love, the more shall we welcome every commandment as we would a benediction, for we shall then see that the river of the water of our life, clear as crystal, could proceed only from his throne.

But not alone, Christian friends, in those interior manifestations of his Spirit to our souls, nor in those duties whereby he teaches us still more his love, are we to contemplate our Father in heaven, if we would be perfect as he is perfect. He reveals himself in every providence, and we need to accustom ourselves to hear his voice and feel his heart in every incident of life. Does even not a sparrow fall to the ground without his notice, and are not the hairs of our heads all numbered, and does he not regard each momentary thought or care or need of those who are of more value than many sparrows? Doth he clothe the lily, and give to the beast food, and satisfy the wants of every living thing, and shall he

not much more clothe and feed and satisfy us, whom he has made in his own image, that he might bestow on us far larger blessings than the natural world could receive? He will do this. He is doing it for us every day. He never forgets it, and never lacks the power or will.

All the events of life, all our joys or sorrows, are but forms in which he manifests his love to us. At first they may appear, as he does to the natural eye, without form or comeliness, and with no beauty that we should desire them; but when we come to see them as they are, they are clothed with loveliness—when our distrust gives way to faith, and our faith changes into knowledge, and we find in every scene and moment some new evidence of that grace which maketh all things work together for good to us, we may come to take pleasure in distresses, in reproaches, in persecutions, for Christ's sake; we may glory in our infirmities and tribulations that the power of Christ may rest upon us, knowing that only when we are weak, then are we strong; that only when emptied of self, are we filled with the Divine Love; that only when crucified with Christ do we truly live. In the ordering of our affairs, God is near us, and speaks to us, and waits to show himself to the watching eye. The history of every soul is a constant manifestation of God's perfection. Who of us can closely trace the record of a single day's experience, and not find it full of the evidence of God's unwearied patience and exhaustless love? It is only because we keep our eyes shut, that we do not see this, and are not filled thereby with adoration, admiration, praise, and love.

But though our Father in heaven reveals that perfection whose vision is to change us into its own likeness, in all these ways it is in his word and in his Son Jesus Christ that we are chiefly to behold this glory. The more any soul ponders and dwells upon the interior fullness of the Bible, the more profoundly we enter into its depths and become penetrated with its spirit, the more clear and unalterable is the conviction that it is a true revelation from God. The Bible carries in itself the perfect and perpetual witness to its truth. Criticism does not impair this witness. All attacks upon it do not weaken it at all. There is that in the depths of every soul which utters the responsive yea and amen to all the teachings of the Bible. And if we really desire to be perfect, even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect; if we would grow in his likeness by the only way in which the transformation can be wrought—by a contemplation of himself—we shall have much study of the sacred Scriptures, until by ceaseless meditation on them the word of Christ shall come to dwell richly in us, in all wisdom, filling us with peace by the faith with which it inspires us, and making us pure by the perfect love with which it liberates us from self and raises us from death unto the newness of the perfect life. We shall grow

in grace, just as we grow in the knowledge which all these sources give us of Jesus Christ our Lord.

And, O friends in this congregation! if such there be anxious to find this knowledge—O babes in Christ! if such there be new born through its finding—O disciples of Christ! long taught in this heavenly wisdom—O heirs of glory! who are waiting for the crown—may the Lord himself lead you unto the perfect acquaintance with himself; may he take away the vail which hides his face, and give you the clear eye to look on him, till "we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Amen.

Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."
—Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."
—Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON IX.*

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THE WORD OF GOD APPLIED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD THE SOVEREIGN REMEDY FOR THE MISERIES OF MEN.

"SEEING ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."—1 PETER 1: 22–25.

OUR text teaches that, selfish and corrupt as men are, they can be brought to disinterested love and entire purity, when born again of incorruptible seed, by means of the word of God. That *seed* and *word* here do not mean the same thing is evident from the change of prepositions, εκ before σπορας, denoting the efficient cause, and δια before λογου the instrument or means. That the *word* (λογος) is the spoken and written revelation, and not the personal Logos, is evident from the last verse, where it is interchanged with

* Delivered at Hartford, Ct., at the twentieth anniversary of the Society for the Promotion of Collegiate and Theological Education at the West.

ρημα, and this is the word (ρημα) which by the Gospel is preached unto you.

In order to love and purity, then, according to our text, men must be born again, not of the old and corruptible seed of nature, which gives their first and sinful birth, but born again of the new and incorruptible seed of the Spirit, proceeding directly from God, and made to germinate by means of that word of God, proclaimed in the Gospel, which liveth and abideth forever, while all human things fade away.

No one, as it seems to me, can look upon men as they now exist, and as they always have existed in all ages of their history, without seeing the necessity of their being regenerated, born again, if they would at all become the worthy offspring of a God of love and purity. When I look at the human race just as it is, and just as it always has been from the earliest period of its history, I am astonished at the superficial views of those who affirm that human nature is not depraved, and that men need only cultivate and train and educate what they have by nature, and that thus they can become good and perfect without regeneration or the supernatural workings of God's Spirit in the soul; and I am equally amazed at the presumption of those philosophers and theologians, who undertake to account satisfactorily for the existence of man just as he is, and to show clearly how it is that such a creation, in its present condition, is an honor to God and a good to the universe. When I read these theories, propounded usually with such an air of self-complacency, it seems to me, if the authors are really sincere in their assumptions, it must be that they have never seen the actual condition of mankind, and know but little of the nature and character of men as they really are.

Precisely why God has made just such a world as this, and put into it just such a race, in just such a condition, as has always occupied it, I believe nobody knows; and all professedly rational and satisfactory accounts of the matter, which have ever yet been given, are, as I see them, but a mockery to the earnest, a foolery to the thoughtful, and a sham to all mankind. And this entirely apart from all theories of the origin of sin, or of the corruption of our nature; and taking only the facts which lie upon the very surface of the history of man. For His own glory and the highest good of the universe, no doubt; but how? in what way? why precisely by this process rather than by some other involving less of sin and shame and agony? why was not some other way possible? These are questions which we are constantly asking, and to which we never get a satisfactory answer. And if we can not get satisfactory answers to these questions, it matters very little whether other subordinate speculative questions are answered or not. It is all an inexplicable mystery, and we can only say: "*Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*" God knows if we do not, and he has given proof of his love in the gift of his Son for our salvation.

Look at men as a whole just as they are now, and just as they always have been ever since they began to exist. I do not say this or that exceptional individual, or this or that exceptional community; but all men of all ages and all regions, and all races, by whom the world has ever been peopled, and is now peopled, and considering each individual of this countless multitude as an immortal soul, capable of bearing the image of God intellectually and ethically, and expanding through all eternity in the divine glories of mental greatness and moral goodness, and is not the actual condition of the human race a mystery?

Observe the lower stratum of population in all great cities, from the beginning of the world to the present time. Millions on millions of individuals, each an immortal soul, capable of the highest development, living and dying like the brutes that perish, without even the physical comforts and advantages which the brutes themselves have, and that, too, in the midst of the most Christian nations. What does God want of so many human creatures of such sorts? Why not have fewer and of better quality? Who knows? How many thousands, nay millions, of Australians, and Feejees, and Diaks, and of whatever savage names, have lived and died, are still living and dying, on this earth, apparently never rising in the scale of being perceptibly above the rank of rats and reptiles! And are these God's immortal souls, created in his image and destined to his eternity? Will you explain it to me how and why it is? Or go to equatorial Africa, the land of the monstrous gorilla, and show me God's offspring there, in the human inhabitants, whose most relishing and delicious food is the gigantic monkey, the boa constrictor, and each other—a kind of food which certainly has the advantage of great economy and abundant reproductiveness. Can you make the reason, the final cause of this, all plain to the understanding? Yet these horrible savages, disgusting and loathsome as they seem to us, are morally no worse than, possibly not so bad as, the many of the classically cultivated and wonderfully intellectual Greeks and Romans, as they are described to us by their own historians, Thucydides, and Tacitus, and Suetonius, and by the Apostles in the New Testament.

Indeed it seems to me that the capabilities of the human race for wickedness and degradation have never yet been fully described or even adequately conceived by the most terrible of the theological writers on total depravity; and on the other hand the capacity for elevation and refinement is equally wonderful. These human creatures, all and each, collectively and individually, are God's offspring, immortal souls, capable of regeneration and eternal life. They can, each one of them, be born again of incorruptible seed, by means of the word of God, and brought to love and purity and an eternity of spiritual, God-like life. We have the experimental proof of actual fact that many of the most degraded and most

wicked of the human race have been, by the spirit and word of God, made pure and noble and good, evidencing the possibility of such a regeneration.

Besides this extreme and gross though by no means exaggerated view of what that human nature is which is to be regenerated and sanctified by the spirit of God through the means of his word, let us take a nearer and more interior look at the actual fact as it exists among the most cultivated nations, where the Gospel for ages has been the civilizer, and where all the institutions of the Christian religion are found in full operation. Without at all ignoring, but with full and grateful recognition of the fact of a great amount of individual excellence and social purity and happiness in Christian nations, yet even in them the deplorable effects of depravity are but too plainly seen.

1. Sins of the spirit by the perversion of the natural susceptibilities.

Avarice. A prudent foresight of future needs perverted to a mere love of acquisition, saying to the gold, Thou art my hope, and to the most fine gold, Thou art my confidence, whence extortion and all its miseries, slavery and all its demoralizations, and infinite suffering among men.

Ambition. A laudable desire to excel perverted to a towering determination to trample others under foot at whatever expense of treasure and blood. Hence desolating wars, destruction, devastation and wretchedness.

Envy. Where one can neither acquire nor excel, the indulgence of a morbid hatred toward those who can; the meanest of all mean passions, yet one of the most common, even among Christians and clergymen.

2. Sins of the flesh by the perversion of the natural appetites.

Gluttony. The natural and necessary relish for food perverted to an indulgence worse than brutal, for brutes seldom over-eat.

Drunkenness. The necessary desire for drink perverted to an indulgence which brings misery unspeakable, every day and every moment, upon a very large portion of the human race, and brutalizes the human soul.

Lust. The relation between the sexes which God has chosen as the most fitting symbol of the relation between himself and the devout soul, the foundation of some of the purest and most ecstatic joys of life. Oh! the untold miseries arising from its perversion in all ages and nations, and in every Christian as well as in every pagan community.

And withal, the almost universal stupidity and recklessness in regard to sin; and all these perversions and horrors the most common and every-day occurrences, in all ages, in all nations, in the most Christian lands, from the beginning of history to the present day.

And religion, the Christian religion inself, intended by God as the cure of all these evils, by a most wonderful ingenuity of depravity, instead of diminishing, is often made to aggravate them all, through ethical errors and fearful superstitions, through the narrowness of bigotry and the ferocious cruelty of persecution.

And this remedial religion has never been put in the possession of a tenth part of the human race, who all are to be saved by it, or they have no method of salvation revealed to us. No wonder the best Christians sometimes groan in mental and bodily agony, and are almost ready to sink to hopeless despair, especially when they place the actual facts side by side with the miserable, futile, abortive attempts of philosophers and theologians to account for them and give a rational vindication of them. So the seaman sometimes, in a dark and tempestuous night, out of his reckoning and with only the uncertain glimmer of a distant lighthouse to guide him, must just put head to the wind, hold hard on the helm, and wait for the subsiding of the storm and the rising of the daylight. Better in such cases no chart at all than a chart constructed in ignorance of the soundings of the deep and the bearings of the coast.

Perhaps in all the developments of human depravity and blindness and weakness, there is nothing more discouraging and painful than the misuse of the remedies which men propose and apply for the alleviation and cure of the evils under which they suffer.

The science of politics and the art of government are perverted to tyranny and oppression, to war and anarchy, and nearly one half of the miseries of the world have arisen from the conflicts between the governments and the peoples. And what can excite a more intense indignation than a history of the opinions and feelings and actions of the governing classes generally in all generations in respect to the governed?

Physicians, sometimes, with the most benevolent intentions adopt theories in regard to disease and apply medicines which torture instead of alleviating, and exasperate instead of curing—and after there is good reason to suspect all is not right, there are some who still go on with the most wiry pertinacity, and in blind adherence to their theory torment and kill for the benefit of science as conscientiously as persecuting inquisitors for the good of the Church and the glory of God.

The theologian, too, in his anxiety to vindicate the ways of God to men, and thus reconcile men to God, often makes ten puzzles in solving one, inspires hate where he would induce love, and destroys the soul instead of saving it. And yet he perseveres, for he is sure his explanations ought to be satisfactory, and if they do harm rather than good, it is because men are depraved, and not because he has undertaken to tell more than he knows.

For universal obligatory belief, for the salvation of the soul and

the conversion of the world, the simple, direct, aphoristic, matter-of-fact teachings of the Bible are enough without the jointings and tinkerings and inharmonious harmonizings of speculative philosophy. It is the sincere milk of the word which men need in order that they may grow thereby; and not the hard, biting, indigestible cheese which theologians so often make of it. Not that theologians are blameworthy for speculating; it is the nature of mind to investigate and to systematize. As Lord Bacon truly says: "The human understanding is active, and can not halt or rest, but, even though without effect, still presses forward." The fault is not in the speculating, that is all right and useful when kept in its proper sphere. The fault is in imposing the results of these speculations upon others, as articles of faith, and insisting upon it that these theories shall relieve the difficulties of others, because perhaps they may have relieved our own, when their only effect is and must be in certain minds to disturb and destroy. The doctrine itself is difficult enough, but the explanation is a hundred-fold more so. The real facts of theology are hard enough, but the theories invented to ease and smooth over the facts are ten times harder than the facts themselves. Says the philosopher to the troubled inquirer: "The pill, I know, is a bitter one, it needs a little coating; come, I will put it into this chestnut burr, and then you will not taste the bitter as it goes down. Now gape, sinner, and swallow, and be thankful for a Meg Merrilies who can make hard things easy to you."

Thus the effect of the word is hindered by many who desire to be its promoters; the injudicious defenses of its friends are more fatal to its success than the fiercest assault of its foes; and men are driven into sin and darkness by those who really wish to lead them into the light of the Lord.

The condition of the human race, physically and morally, is a dark mystery to us all, and there is no sufficient explanation of it; but one thing we do know, and that is a satisfaction, even if we know nothing else—God has put into our hands a remedy for the moral ills of man, and ultimately for the physical—a remedy unchangeable, infallible, always effective—his word—and this remedy we can always apply with a certainty of success.

Attend again to the declarations of the Apostle: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

The effect of this word is to produce sincerity and love, not hypocrisy and hate. It is the truth of God operating by the

efficiency of the Spirit of God. Here is something for us to busy ourselves with—here is scope enough for all the activity of our nature—and here our powers can always be usefully employed.

Sickening and distressing as is the view of men in their depravity and debasement, yet the human creature is, after all, the noblest of God's works which ever meet our eye, especially when this degenerate creature is born again, not of the corruptible seed, but of the incorruptible, by means of the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. What more lovely, more delightful, more perfectly admirable, than the cultivated, regenerated, sanctified Christian man or woman, than the thoroughly Christianized community of men? Yet these men are the brethren of all other men, and it is God's Spirit and God's word which raises them above the common level of the race. And the word acts by no magic energy. It is the ideas and principles of the word, transfused into the soul by aid of the Spirit's power, which produces the effect.

But to prevent mutilations, corruptions, and perversions, it is necessary that this word be committed to writing, fixed and permanent on the alphabetic page. The book is better than the Church (that keeps the book indeed but hides it) as the depository of divine truth. That portion of nominal Christendom (and it is much the largest portion numerically) which makes church tradition superior to or coördinate with the written revelation, and has withheld the Bible from the people, has smothered the divine truth under a mass of the commandments of men. From the earliest times they have chosen the ship as the emblem of the Church; and with them the old bottom has become so encumbered with an aggregation of traditionary barnacles, that she can scarcely move, she barely floats and drifts, and makes no progress. But on the book, open to the eyes of all, and with freedom of thought and discussion, there can be no permanent aggregation of barnacles. The ship is hauled into dock at very frequent intervals, and where freedom prevails, every man is at hand with his scraper to keep the bottom clear and smooth; and the old ship of the true spiritual Church of Christ is so solidly built that it will endure any amount of scraping without injury. The word is stable; there it stands from age to age; and whatever changes may take place in opinions, in philosophy, in institutions, in social life, there is the old text, just as it always was, just as it always will be. There may be misunderstandings, there may be perverse interpretations, there may be dogmatic glosses; but while the text remains, the inevitable result of thorough investigation will be to wheel men round at last to the true meaning of the word again. The ship may turn with the tide and veer with the wind; but while the mooring holds, she can never break quite away nor go entirely adrift; and she will certainly bring round right when the wind goes down and the tide finds its level. While

there is a written word, intelligible, unequivocal, error must be temporary and mutable, not permanent nor steadily progressive.

To us, in regard to spiritual and eternal things, there is an absolute necessity for a reliable book, an objective revelation, sure and infallible. The late Theodore Parker once told me that he no more felt the need of an infallible revelation on religion than on chemistry. It struck me that there were some very essential differences in the two cases. Chemistry lies entirely within the bounds of natural knowledge, religion does not. We can detect the mistakes of chemists by our own investigations in the world of nature, as open to us as to the chemist, but who can go into the spirit lands, and there detect the mistakes of the religious philosophers, and come back and let us know? By the time the mistake is ascertained it is too late to correct it. Moreover, chemistry pertains only to material things and this short life; but religion to spiritual things, which fix our destinies for eternity. I must have an infallible, objective revelation on religion, or I must discard religious thought altogether, and live wholly in and for the world of sense.

This divine word, however, this regenerating word on which so much depends, to us and to all mankind, at the present day, (and so it will continue to the end of time,) is locked up in ancient and foreign languages, formed under strange and unknown climes and customs, to be perfectly learned only by hard and long continued study, with ample literary apparatus; and a kind of study, too, which to most men, as I have had ample opportunity to know by forty years' experience in teaching, is extreme weariness to the flesh. Yet here is the only avenue to this divine word; for there are no Scriptures plenarily inspired but the original Scriptures, and the gift of tongues has ceased. God has deposited his word among us in this way. This is God's method for man's access to it, and woeful defeat awaits any organized body of God's army who neglect to come to his arsenal, by this the only gate which he has opened.

The pure and effective application then of this, the only infallible remedy which God has provided for the sins and woes of mankind, requires, in every community, the establishment of colleges and literary institutions of the highest order. This has always been known and acknowledged in every Christian nation. Not one man in a hundred, no, not one in a thousand, of all who go into the ministry, ever have the taste, zeal, and energy to pursue this study effectively in private; and even where this thousandth man is found, he can not, from his individual resources, collect a competent literary apparatus for the purpose. Nor is the individual mind, without the help and collision of other associated minds, able to make a clear passage through the thorny paths of ancient linguistic study.

Nor the ancient languages alone, but also the modern. The varied forms of human thought, to as wide an extent as possible, should be called in to the aid of him, who would ascertain clearly the meaning of God's word for himself, and learn how effectively and fully to communicate that meaning to others. Not that every minister must be an accomplished linguist himself; but he must learn how to breathe in an atmosphere of linguistic learning, and be able to avail himself of the acquisitions of others.

And not languages only, but the sciences, all, must contribute their quota to the art of divine interpretation; for all truth is from God, natural as well as spiritual—Creation and the Bible are both from him, and all truth is homogeneous, harmonious, self-consistent. If, then, any supposed truths of natural science and of revelation seem to conflict with each other, we are precisely in the condition of the arithmetician, who has done his sum, as he thinks correctly, but finds that it will not prove; he must go all over it again, both the sum and the proof, and detect the hidden mistake; for he knows, by the result, that there must be a mistake somewhere.

Want of harmony shows there is error, and there is no real conflict anywhere between a truth of natural science and a truth of theology; and an apparent conflict only shows the need of a re-investigation, either in our science or in our theology, and probably in both. And how is this to be accomplished without institutions of learning of the highest order? The institutions must be fitted to the communities in which they exist. They must begin small where the communities are small, and grow proportionately, keeping pace with society around them.

I know institutions may be perverted, but so far as the interpretation of the Bible is concerned, if they are really learned institutions, they can not long be perverted; for real learning, applied to the Bible, inevitably leads to an understanding of what its teachings really are, and not all the dogmatic prejudice, or scientific scorn, or sectarian blindness in the world can effectually prevent or long retard this result.

Let no one say we must have the meeting-houses first and the colleges afterwards. We must have them both together.

In the old church, the chief meeting-house in a district was always also the college for the education of its ministers.

This practice, we are told by the ancient fathers, was introduced by the Apostle John, who established a school of this kind in the principal church at Ephesus.

Supposing men should say, let us have the paddle-wheels, for our steamboats—the paddle-wheels, by all means—we can get them cheap, we can make them ourselves with a little help; but as to the engines, they are cumbrous, complicated, expensive things. The material must be brought from a distance; the best of work-

men must be employed at high wages; we will wait till we are richer before we get them. I know it is possible to work the paddle-wheels, if they are very small ones, by hand or by horse-power, but not long or to much advantage. We must have the engines, or the paddle-wheels will do but little.

And if you are poor, you will be a long while growing rich enough without your engines to enable you to get them. You must have your engines before you can get your start out of your poverty. Your boats will do nothing effectively without both engines and paddle-wheels, and you must have them both to begin with.

By the appointment of Christ himself, and as the necessities of the case most obviously require, a class of men are set apart from all other employments to devote themselves to the study of God's word, that they may be its interpreters to the people.

These men know that they have no miraculous gifts, either of inspiration or of tongues, and that their qualifications must be the result of their own industry and fidelity in the use of the opportunities which God has given them. Dare such men assume to be interpreters of God's word, without being able to read it themselves, as God gives it to them? Dare they take this responsible office, without doing all in their power to make themselves as ready as possible in the original languages of the Holy Scriptures?

Not that every minister is bound to be an accomplished linguist; but every minister who can do it, is bound to make the original Scriptures his ultimate appeal both for doctrine and practice; and to take the words of God as God originally uttered them, and make these words the basis of his instructions to the people.

But perhaps some may think that this is all theory and not fact. Many men are good and successful preachers with no knowledge of the ancient languages. The Methodists did a great work before they had colleges or an educated ministry. But the Methodists have always operated in a land of colleges. Their first generation of preachers were taught by the Wesleys, who were graduates of Oxford, the proudest of the English universities, and eminent Greek scholars; and many of these preachers, though without the advantages of early education, became most enthusiastic students of the original Scriptures, some of them committing large portions, and even the whole of the Greek Testament to memory, and all, in their extempore preaching able to expound the Hebrew text of any passage of the Old Testament which they had occasion to use. Many intensely interesting examples of this early Methodist scholarship are given by Southey in his biography of the Wesleys. They believed in their hearts that the original Scriptures were the word of God to men, and as the interpreters of God's word to the people they acted conscientiously in accordance with their belief.

There is but one alternative—there must be either direct plenary inspiration, or a familiarity with the Bible in its original tongues, to qualify one to be an interpreter of God's word to the people. Such a scholarship as that of the first Methodists lasted a good while, and fertilized a wide field otherwise barren. But diffused through successive generations, and spreading over a large space, it began at last to run very thin. In this country especially, it fell off to a mere echo; and for the last thirty years the Methodists, with most commendable diligence, have been returning to the scholarship of their founders, and establishing everywhere in the land, literary institutions of a high order for both clergy and laity.

The Baptists, too, began their career among us, by decrying human learning, and especially the study of the ancient languages; but the progress of society around them and their own good sense, have entirely changed both their opinions and their feeling in this respect; and now for zealous, earnest, persevering, successful study of the original languages of the Scriptures, there is no denomination whatever, which goes before the Baptists. And so it ever must be. Such is the mighty power of truth in the long run. Truth will force its way, sooner or later.

Uneducated men sometimes educate themselves and by their own supereminent talent become better trained than most of the educated; but these are rare examples, of men with great native powers, and are exceptions to the general rule. Such rare instances can not be calculated upon to supply the daily wants of the Church.

Uneducated men of only the average native power, in a limited sphere, and for special departments, are often eminently useful; but to give permanence and value to their work, they must be surrounded and sustained by the educated. They are like the rifle-rangers and light artillery, admirably effective in their peculiar line; but without the compact bodies, heavily armed, to form a base for their operations, easily scattered and worse than useless for any permanent achievement.

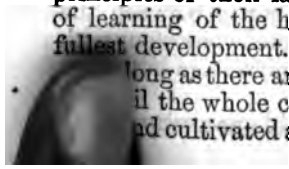
The revolver may say to the columbiad: "You great clumsy thing, you can not move without a team of twenty horses to start you, and you want an hour to turn round in; in a close fight, hand-to-hand, you can do nothing, and you cost heaps of money to begin with." "True, my lively little snapper," (replies the columbiad;) "but I can throw a three hundred pound iron ball five miles through the air, and at one blow sink a ship with a crew of a thousand men, while you are picking off some half-dozen enemies in detail with your leaden pellets." And this is just the difference between the erudite Calvin with his Institutes and the unlettered colporteur with his tracts. In the war with Satan and sin, we must have both, and both at the same time.

I have presented this subject—the indispensable necessity of col-

leges and literary institutions of the highest order, to the Church, for the accomplishment of its appropriate work—in only one of its aspects, the aspect in which it has most forcibly presented itself to my own mind, in consequence of the professional duties to which my life has been devoted. There are many other points of view no less important and impressive, and many of these have been presented with great ability and power in the reports of the Secretary of this Society and in the discourses of those who have before spoken at its anniversaries. Thank God, there is no difference of opinion among intelligent and earnest Christians as to the necessity of accomplishing the object contemplated by this Society. Here there is a wonderful, a most cheering unanimity. The only question is, whether this Society can not wait till some other objects have been accomplished first. If twenty years of most earnest and self-sacrificing labor on the ground give me any right to an opinion, I say, No, this Society can not wait a moment, its resources must all be put in requisition now, or the whole field to us is lost. General Knox always said that Washington lost the battle of Germantown, because he waited for a stone house to be demolished, before he would press on to meet the advancing foe. In this case his habitual caution and self-distrust operated disastrously. My health broke down in the West and I became entirely incapacitated for labor there, not from over-work, not from any thing which I actually had to do; but from constant anxiety lest the good Christians to whom God had committed the funds might be saying to themselves:

"Well, we will have our colporteurs and our missionaries and our meeting-houses first, and then after a while the people themselves will build their colleges." Dear brethren, there can be no first and last in this work. All must be first; your missionaries must be first, and your meeting-houses must be first, and your tracts must be first, and your colleges and theological schools must be first, and they must all be first, and they must all go together with one unbroken front or the whole battle is lost. All the divisions of the grand army must be moving on together, and there can be no waiting for any thing, any more than one leg can be waiting for the other, when a man is on a rapid march.

Happily this whole matter is now seen and appreciated in its true light. The labors of this Society have not been in vain. With the most gratifying liberality an enlightened Christian public is responding to its appeals, and our churches are true to the principles of their fathers in respect to the necessity of institutions of learning of the highest class, for the use of the Church in its fullest development.



long as there are new States springing up West, and still west of il the whole country from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific is ad cultivated and civilized and christianized, just so long must

there be some method East for sustaining colleges West. Whatever may be our views of the mysteries of divine providence or on the nicer points of theological speculation, one thing is absolutely certain, and we are all agreed in it, namely, that we are put into this world to help each other, and whatever may be the origin of the evil in which the world is involved, there is but one way out of it, and that is by the word of God; and we can wield the power of the word of God by those methods only which the decree of divine providence has made effective, and which all Christian bodies, since the times of the Apostles, have been obliged to resort to.

And it is not brutish Australians, nor cannibal New-Zealanders, nor snake-eating Africans that we are laboring for, (though all these can be regenerated and brought to a life of purity and love by the Spirit and word of God, yet with a distressing seedtime and a long deferred harvest;) but we are extending a little temporary help (such as our fathers, in the infancy of their institutions, received from their beloved island home) to the noblest work of modern civilization, where the seedtime is all genial and lovely, and the harvest is almost simultaneous with it, as in some tropical orchards you may see the bud, the blossom, and the ripened fruit, all growing at the same time on the same tree. This is what we have seen, and still see, in our moral gardens at the West; and if we are faithful to the trust which God has put into our hands, we may continue to see it, till the whole space between the Atlantic and the Pacific is filled and exulting with a complete Christian civilization.

How nobly and efficiently the West comes forward in this hour of our country's need, in this last great struggle against barbarism and anarchy! And have the twenty years' labor of this Society had nothing to do with making the preparation for this great triumph of national principle over the meanest and most sectional selfishness? How many of the glorious men who are there leading this magnificent movement, think you, have been trained in the institutions which you have fostered, and which, without your aid, would have perished? Go on with your work—you can not afford to stop—scatter still more profusely your seed, the harvest comes at once, and the yield is a thousand fold.

But some may say: "It takes so long to get this thorough education, and the work is of such pressing and immediate urgency, that we must shorten the course by four or five years and have the men in the field sooner." But would it not be cheaper to contrive some way, or pray God to open some way, by which, for the present emergency, men might be born sixteen years old, and thus save all those long years which the body and mind at present need to acquire their compactness, consistency, and firmness? This would shorten the course, to be sure, in a way that would be worth the while; and shall we not get up education societies and prayer-

meetings to effect a purpose so desirable? Every body sees the absurdity of this. We can never help God along in his work by the violation of his laws, whether physical or moral. God spurns all such help.

The Creator, by irrevocable laws, has fixed certain limits, has made certain periods of time indispensably necessary for the consolidating and the fitting for actual service, of the powers both of the body and mind, and it is all in vain for men to think of transgressing these limits, or essentially curtailing these periods of time, without injury. God will have his own way. He will not have men born with the strength and power and stature of sixteen years, however urgent the exigency may be; nor will he, in ordinary cases, have minds grow into the discipline necessary for good service in less time than the experience of ages has decided to be requisite for a truly liberal education. Uneducated preachers, who decry human learning and the study of languages, claim for themselves, as they must do to give any authority to their preaching, a special gift of the Spirit, an inward light, superseding to a great extent the necessity of the outward word. Indeed, among those who acknowledge the supernatural character of the Christian revelation, there are in fact but three theories possible (except in a few exceptional cases) of a worthy entrance into the Christian ministry, always admitting genuine piety to be in all cases the indispensable prerequisite, to wit:

1st. The external, authoritative, ecclesiastical impartation of ministerial gifts as held by the Papists and other High Churchmen; or

2d. A specific inspiration and infallible inward light, such as is claimed by many fanatical sects; or

3d. A knowledge of the Bible as God gave it to men at first by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, without the necessity of depending on uninspired translations.

We have deliberately and intelligently rejected the first two of these theories, and adopted the third. Now let us deliberately, intelligently, and consistently accept all the consequences of this principle, and act throughout in accordance with it.

SERMON X.

BY REV. JAMES G. VOSE,
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"THE SORROW OF THE WORLD."

"THE sorrow of the world worketh death."—2 COR. 7 : 10.

WE often cherish the idea that a misfortune clears off a portion of our score of guilt, and that by so much as we are the poorer for some earthly trouble, we are the better in character. That it is not so the text plainly asserts. There is a sorrow that not only has no canceling power, to make our past accounts look better, but is even itself a shame and debt. It is a melancholy thought that suffering may be endured, not only without benefit, but only as a prelude to still greater suffering. Yet it is so. Some kinds of sorrow are medicinal and some poisonous; just as some herbs cleanse and invigorate the system, while others only clog and stupefy it. We are are angry with a child sometimes for being unhappy, for putting on a sour, sulky look, instead of a bright and cheerful one. The very same disposition in grown men and women we call depression, melancholy, or low spirits, and pity them often when they deserve blame. We deal very leniently, both in ourselves and in others, with the sin of being unhappy, and scarcely recognize the possibility of a sorrow that works death. Yet sometimes we are called to look upon very clear instances of it. Every day in "la Morgue," at Paris, are exposed, to be identified, the bodies of those found dead in the streets or river, the largest part of them suicides. Every year in France two or three thousand persons perish by their own hand. Misery has caused this misery. They have had a sorrow which has literally worked death. Some of them have been unfortunate, and the hardest struggles have been vain, and so in despair or mental distraction, they have loosed the silver cord. But most of them have a history of crime. The gambler finds his credit and his fortune gone, a burning sense of disappointment and chagrin throbbing in his veins; he will not give up the ravishing pursuit, and yet he can not go on. His sorrow worketh death. The poor girl, defiled by others' sins, having no courage to face the contempt of friend or foe, fancies in the grave what she wishes it were, an eternal sleep. Her sorrow worketh death. The drunkard, when even drink fails to give the oblivion he seeks, when for its sake he has given up all other comforts, and finds racking and torturing pains his only recompense, plunges into a more powerful lethe, that he may thirst

no more. His sorrow worketh death. But sorrow works not only temporal but also spiritual death. Poverty has wrought laziness and irresolution and self-contempt. The self-same sorrows that stir up some to indomitable toil, to self-denial, to beautiful patience and Christian trust, lead others into vice. They have no heart to conquer fortune, and so they die daily. Character dies, trait by trait; hope dies and with it self-respect; faith in God and love to man go out together, and so their sorrow works a worse than bodily death.

But there are cases less distinct, in which nevertheless the Apostle's words have a plain meaning. There is a vast amount of sorrow, and very generally diffused in the world, which is working death — that is, it is lowering instead of raising the character: mean in itself, it results in meanness and selfishness, and is preparing the way for an eternal sorrow. Some of it is indeed occasioned by outward circumstances, but much of it is nourished and fostered in the heart, even though known to be a sin.

It is with this sorrow that we have to do at present.

I. It arises, first, from an exaggerated view of our own deserts. It is very natural for us to think well of our own talents, our birth, and native endowments. While a few men are so distrustful, that they do not dare to show themselves before their fellows, most are quite willing to meet any occasion, or to fill any place. It is rare that a man declines an office, because he deems himself incompetent; and while all would agree that the requirements are great, very few would shrink from the attempt to meet them. Self-conceit is a part of our original sin. If divine grace does not remove it, we need to have it scourged out of us by the rough contact of life. And yet the exhibition of self-conceit in others we despise. Nothing is less easily tolerated in any society. And if we ourselves, possessing this overweening desire for recognition, for place, and believing our talents to be greater than those about us—if, notwithstanding we are shrewd enough to realize how disgusting such a sentiment appears, we shall disguise it in every way. A man with whom this feeling is constantly present, must suffer many mortifications, some just and some unjust; but his heart is so set on respect and distinction, that, in the jostlings of life, he can not fail to suffer. That this feeling is wrong and needless we all know, and yet how common and how warmly cherished!

What is our so great claim to honor? We think our talents are very great. But a man's talents alone do not deserve any thing; not even so much as his clothes or his physical beauty, or fine manners; for these can all be observed and judged of, but his talents can not be judged of, unless put to some good use. Many a [illegible]or farm has better crops than some good ones, and no man likes [illegible] fruit because it comes from a rich orchard. It was Swift, I

think, who was accustomed to ask somewhat impatiently, when a man was praised in his presence for fine talents, What has he done?

Yet men very often claim credit for abilities that have been little exercised; for merit and worth that have never appeared in any useful form. They are sure they can do more than other men. They are brighter, they are quicker, they have a deeper insight, and others ought to recognize it. In the parable of the talents, it is true, the Saviour gives the greatest increase to those that have the most, but it is the increase only that is rewarded. Possession alone not only gains no credit, but reaps censure. If we have not used our powers diligently before the eyes of men, for their good, we can claim no praise nor even patience from them. We have done them an injury rather, and deserve neglect. But yet what sorrow is caused by this very fact! The man who is too indolent to accomplish any thing great, is yet sour and sad, because he is not praised. The most inconsistent feelings reign within us. Too proud and selfish to win men by benefits, we stand aloof and desire them to bow down to our superiority.

II. Another cause of the sorrow that works death is an exaggerated view of the success of others. In the extreme of this feeling, we think all men happy but ourselves. If they have gained something in which we have failed, or if they possess something which we desire, at once we regard them as very happy on account of it. If nobody had gained it, we should have felt relieved; if they should lose it, we should be rejoiced. The envious spirit is undoubtedly the source of bitter unhappiness. And it is an unhappiness which works death—death to friendship, to cordial sympathy, to admiration. It mars the countenance, dims the brightness and represses the elasticity of the whole man. It takes the mind off from the contemplation of merit to that of mere success. Knowledge as knowledge, skill as skill, worth as worth, we care nothing for. We desire reward.

Now, if we consider rightly, the successes of other men are never understood by us. We do not see the toils that brought them. The steadiness and self-denial, the private struggles they have gone through, we know nothing of. We never think of the drawbacks to their prosperity. Although well acquainted with certain deep afflictions or distresses they endure, which we would not voluntarily accept at the purchase of the greatest wealth, we still envy them and call them happy. The very cheerfulness with which they disguise private grief deceives us, and their noble fortitude makes us curse our lot as miserable compared with theirs. How many seriously believe that God has done more for other men than he has for them! I speak not now of the outcast and degraded, and I do not believe that they are more envious than other

men, though they have more cause. For curiously enough, we do not envy those much above us, but those nearest us, whose success in some comparatively small thing goes a little beyond ours. They are making money a little faster. They get offices or prizes before us, just when we thought them within our grasp. For this we suffer the sorrow of the world. It is not a manly sorrow, because we have done so ill, but a mean sorrow because they have done better. Instead of a noble desire to accomplish something great in the world, we have desired to reach a certain very low excellence, and our whole hearts have been centered on that. We are of those foolish persons whom Paul tells of, who compare themselves among themselves, and are therefore not wise. We narrow our vision to the little town, or parish, or band of associates among whom we live, and their wisdom becomes great wisdom, and their money great wealth, and their successes great honor. When we are surpassed, we become morose and sour. Life is burdensome, and we make it burdensome to others. No man gets a warm look or a hearty congratulation from us. We praise no man who is prosperous. Our sorrow casts a blight over all subjects and persons; it is the sorrow that works death.

III. Once more, the sorrow of the world consists in an impatient desire of sudden and great advancement. We so far forget our immortality, as to wish, like a child, that we might stand by one leap on the highest mountain and see all the kingdoms of the world. We are dissatisfied and disgusted at such success as is at present attainable. The moment we have gained any thing it becomes tasteless. It was not that we wanted. We are constantly illustrating that finely turned remark of Steele in his account of Alexander Selkirk, who when pressed by hunger, or roused to exertion by danger, was comparatively happy, but "when his wants were least, then he found himself most necessitous." We will not use the present for some good end, but listlessly resign all effort.

We have lost confidence by some foolish act; we can not easily regain it — perhaps we never shall be equal to him who escaped that temptation. Therefore we will not try. Health of body or early disadvantages have hindered us from the scholarship or the hard work which another is equal to. Therefore we will not try. The farmer can not have so many, so fertile, so well-wooded acres as he wishes; therefore he will let half he has run to waste. We know what poor economy this is, in pecuniary matters. Every man knows that it is better to work on poor wages than to get nothing, and thus in time the patient worker makes a sure advance. If he builds slowly, he builds firmly, and the gain of a very little every day astonishes us by its rapid accumulation. All the best gains man can make go on compound interest. Knowledge multi-

plies itself, and skill in the patient hand soon becomes a marvel. I stand with wonder by the side of a workman in some common art—the carpenter's for instance—and see with what neatness and exactness he prepares and fits the parts of some simple contrivance. The lesson is more to me than I get from the roar of machinery or the complicated working of loom and spindle. For it is the direct agency of man developing by patient toil, a cunning workmanship, like that the Scriptures praise in the adornments of the tabernacle. The cunning artificer whom Hiram sent to David was only an artisan like this—nay, inferior doubtless to many mechanics of our day. In the poor hamlets of the Alps, on winter evenings, with an old worn knife or two, the peasants carve out in wood articles of use and ornament, graced with a thousand imitative designs, suggestive of their fatherland, the mountains, the chalets, the trees, the vines, the goats and chamois—carrying some of these to a perfection little short of genius, and yet with no higher aptitude or powers than are given to men generally. At first they were as awkward in their attempts as we should be. But evening by evening, the eye has adjusted itself to nicer measurements, and the hand grown facile to a more exact and delicate pressure. And so without a miracle the miracle has been wrought. You know that the fingers of a blind man can detect colors. Necessity and use so educate the sense of feeling, in us blunt and undiscriminating.

Thus, my friends, all the happiness, all the skill, and all the success of life come by patient continuance in well-doing. Yet you who can not to-day scale mountains; who are slow of tongue, and weak of memory, learn no lesson from the skill and attainments of others, save this, that it is of no use for you to try. Yours is the sorrow of the world that worketh death. You demand little of yourself, and therefore get little. You idly build castles, fancying that you were somehow to become rich or famous, and see no happiness in the means, only in the end. But could a man awake some morning to the possession of fame, for which he had never labored, to find himself hailed the author of a noble poem, or of some brilliant painting, he still would have no idea of the happiness of the artist whose toils had gained this recognition. "I would throw all my pictures into the sea," would the true artist say, "rather than yield the joy of painting yet again." Does not the mean-spirited sorrow of him whose powers lie all unused work death?

IV. Still another cause of the sorrow that works death is an unwillingness to bear the burdens God lays on us. We all have certain difficulties to contend with, known chiefly to ourselves. A large part of the human race suffer under some physical or mental misfortune, causing daily trials. Thousands of human beings are deprived of sight, or of some other of the avenues of sense. God has

mitigated the distress of individuals by multiplying their numbers. I have thought sometimes, when reflecting upon the instruction and happiness which modern times afford to the deaf or the blind, that God has almost blotted out the misfortune by increasing its victims. For had only a few been the sufferers, no means would have been devised for their relief. But the fact that there are so many has called out philanthropic attention and effort. And so all the ills of life are distributed among numbers, that we may all assist each other, and that we may all learn patience and submission. But men suffer the sorrow of the world because they will not bear what is laid upon them. They deem it impossible, with their particular griefs and ills, to achieve a useful or happy life.

A popular author has written an essay "Concerning People who Carry Weight in Life," in which he represents many men so freighted with some particular burden or care, that they can not rise to high attainment. Now it is true that certain conditions are necessary to gain certain results. A degree of health, a certain command of time and of money are needed for education or for business. But the moral bearing of the statement is false. God has given us all ample means for usefulness. Every man must bear his own burdens. Every heart has its own griefs, which, cheerfully accepted, will prove no hindrance in the path of life God has pointed out. What Paul means by urging us to lay aside every weight is not, that we should seek to escape all trouble; for that we can not, any more than he could extract the thorn in the flesh, but that we should not allow it to be a hindrance to our Christian progress; for he adds: "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us." There is the difficulty, my friends. We are not patient; we are not submissive; we are not thankful. We brood over our particular sorrows, and deem them an excuse for not fulfilling a high destiny; and the burden that might be so instructive and purifying becomes a curse. We are suffering the sorrow of the world, that worketh death. We grow self-righteous and rebellious under his chastening rod. And so, many use all the ills of life, poverty, reproach, domestic trouble. They do not rise above them, with humble and repentant trust, but sink down to discontent, indolence, and complaint. Thus every day, a lower, meaner grade of feeling is reached. Generosity and sympathy die out from the breast. Love of self is the one increasing passion. The range of interest is narrow; the flush of feeling is fainter; God and man, to the distorted mind, seem to have united against him. The sorrow of the world worketh death.

V. Finally, the sorrow of the world is wrought by discouragement in regard to our own character and prospects. Men who have suffered some outward or inward grief, who have been disappointed in business or in office, are led into callous indifference

or settled despair. Life grows dark to them. They look gloomily upon it, not because of the superior radiance of heaven, but because they themselves have been thwarted and set at naught. To set about retrieving their past errors is too difficult a task. To labor on uncomplainingly is too great an exercise of virtue. They have been censured, it may be, for wrong-doing. Instead of accepting reproof, and laboring to understand its full application to them, they settle down in the conviction that every one is against them, that men are especially set upon finding out and magnifying their faults. Thus, instead of escaping from the fault, they become reckless and despairing; their sorrow works death. They peevishly affirm that men are not willing to give them credit for any thing, hence all effort and all hope are resigned.

It was to just to such reception of reproof that Paul referred, when he said to the Corinthians: "The sorrow of the world worketh death." He had been accusing them of sin, and urging their purification. Their sorrow at his reproof had wrought carefulness and fear, and clearing of themselves from all participation in guilt. But the sorrow of the world declares itself the injured party, refuses to acknowledge sin, or to repent of it. It is of no use, will such a man say; it is of no use trying to gain a good character. I am despised and looked down upon; I am suspected and mistrusted; therefore I will not try to amend. But remember, I beseech you, that character is a possession that can not be wholly taken from us. As it was wittily said by Bentley, that no man can be written down by any body but himself; so no man can forever lose a good character but by his own means. If we do not deserve censure, it will not harm us. If we do, and profit by it, we shall rise again to the esteem of all the good. Character finds its own level. Like water in an aqueduct, it will as quickly flow up to find its true level, as it will flow down. Recklessness and despair only make certain our destruction. And yet how many become discouraged after a few failures and a few rebuffs! All the sufferings and sorrows of life make them worse instead of better men. How different is this from true repentance! True repentance is sorrow gilded by hope and love; true repentance admits all our own unworthiness, while it rejoices in the goodness of God; true repentance is lost in admiration of Christ, and desire to attain his likeness. But the sorrow of the world worketh death. It sees nothing better in the future; admits only misfortune and inequality in the past; it blames God and blames man; it is the spirit of the suicide and the desperado; and if it lead not to swift destruction here, it prepares the way for spiritual and eternal death.

We have thus considered some of the causes which produce the sorrow of the world. Would that I could vividly convey to you a sense of its evil results. It does not often drive a man to suicide,

and yet most of the cases of suicide are the result of this death-working sorrow. They occur among people of all ages and conditions, and are often clearly referable to the sorrow we have described. Disappointed avarice, or disappointed ambition; mortified pride, or indolent self-disgust, have led to the fatal act. A desire for sudden wealth, a desire to escape the obligations of debt, an unwillingness to bear some burden in their present lot, has hurried men beyond the bounds of time. More often it drives men into gross vices, to drown in excitement or insensibility the bitterness of the soul. But with many the canker chiefly burns within. An honorable grief strengthens the character. Even unchristian men often become more manly, more full of thought and purpose, by honorable grief. But this sorrow of the world—this sorrow, which springs from selfishness, which is made up of discontent and vanity and laziness, leads only to death.

And herein we have a good rule to judge of our own characters, however we have been accustomed to class ourselves in the past. What are the things in daily life which please or displease us? Our life goes through many moods. Some days we are happy, and others cast down. Some slight events kindle a glow of pleasure that thrills us, and others cast a reserve over us. What are these events? Does conscience bear its witness to those things that give us pleasure? or is gratified pride at the bottom of all our joy? If we are cast down by the success of another, and the thought of our own humble place and prospects in life, this is the sorrow of the world. It works death. It is wholly opposed to the Christian character, and so far as it reigns in us, it is working, and will work death. Unless subdued, it will destroy all the fruitfulness and value of our piety. It is indeed a sad reflection, that while there is so much sorrow in the world, so many griefs to be endured, so many disappointments to be met, that of all this grief so large a portion should work death. Pain that leads to purity may well be borne. Toils that work out some healthful result become delightful. The poet has well exhorted us:

"Learn to suffer and be strong."

But to suffer and grow weaker day by day, not only to have the outward man perish, but the inward man become also weaker and less lovely, this is misery indeed. I have known lives that seemed thus to grow narrower, more selfish and dissatisfied, even to the end. Beginning with many comforts, having many endowments and sources of good, a discontented, restless spirit has despised them and every year has only brought a more complaining, crabbed position, until the whole atmosphere about them seems charged bitterness. Such men, as has been expressively said, carry in their bosoms. Here is the very picture of the wicked in the Bible. "The wicked is like the troubled sea, when it

can not rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

Now it is the office of Christianity to quell these turbulences, to calm these chafing passions, and to make the troubled waves subside. It is the model of the Christian life to possess a restful condition of the soul, in which work is carried on without hurry and without anxiety. The spirit is self-contained, and therefore progress is made. You know that an army composed of soldiers who are dissatisfied and gloomy is not fit for battle. You can see in their faces what they are. The spirit within decides all their effectiveness. So if the current of a man's life be soured by the sorrow of the world, he can not work successfully. He will loiter and hesitate. He will have his eye on his comrades, when he should be following his great Leader, with his eye on the immortal prize. The sorrow of the world is opposed to all high ideals. It is not satisfied with the glories of the future. It would rather have its mess of pottage now. It is not attracted by the thought that eternity will bring even the humblest worker to a place beyond that now reached by the highest and most learned. The true Christian, like the true artist, has a design to do the best he can, not despairing, if it be at present less than other men, not satisfied if it be more; but pressing forward toward perfection.

This sorrow of the world is more or less in all of us, and we can never escape its death-working power save by repentance toward God. We must get beyond self, beyond the world, in order to achieve the victory. The last thing that Christianity gets out of us is pride—sense of personal merit apart from Christian faith. We must learn of Christ, the higher wisdom, that the happiness of life is not measured by what we gain, but by the faithfulness with which we labor. May we all so labor, that we may enter into his rest.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

The Prayer-Meeting.

A REMARKABLE feature in the religious aspect of the times is not only revivals of religion in many places rarely equaled and attended with many conversions, but the almost marvelous interest in the concerns of the soul which extensively prevails among soldiers and regiments in the army. Few Christians would naturally expect that God would pour out his Spirit in times of war, and convert soldiers armed and equipped for the bloody strife on the battle-field. But to the great honor of God and his free grace, a deep and pervading interest is widely felt in the army of the Potomac. Many meetings are held; much prayer is offered; and ministers and pastors of churches, leaving their people for a few days, hasten to the camps of the army under the

auspices of the Christian Commission, and labor and pray and preach to the soldiers, with gratifying success. So far as we remember, no army of any age or country has been blessed with such an instrumentality for good to the bodies and souls of men as the Federal army of the United States, in the labors and prayers of the Christian Commission. Like innumerable angels of mercy with outspread wings, the messengers of the Christian Commission are in all parts of the field, attending to the bodily and spiritual wants of our brave soldiers. Unceasing prayers go up in all parts of the loyal communities that God would bless and save our land. There is abundant encouragement for all friends of the country and the army to prayer for the continuance of the Divine blessing.

"Where is Jesus?"

MANY a brave soldier has made this inquiry while on the long march, in the midst of the fearful conflict, or sick and dying in the hospital. It is a blessed thing to know that thousands in our army have had the important question answered to their souls' eternal satisfaction. Rev. E. P. Smith, an agent of the Christian Commission in the Army of the Cumberland, writing from Chattanooga, Tenn., relates the following beautiful incident connected with a little book sent by the Commission to the army:

"The work goes on well. Souls are added unto the Lord daily. Our chapel is crowded for two hours every night.

"I handed one of our books—*Where is Jesus?* —to a soldier yesterday. He took it, looked at the title, and said, 'I found that out before I left home, or I would not have dared to come to the army.'

"A little after, a fine smooth-faced boy from Michigan came in. I showed the same book to him. He looked at it, his eyes brimmed with tears, and he said: 'That's what I want to know.' There are thousands in the army who want to know how to find Jesus, and the Christian Commission is doing a great and good work in aiding many an anxious inquirer to find the blessed Saviour."

A Neglected Scratch.

A CLERGYMAN lately told a story about a man with whom he boarded when a college boy. The man was at his work one frosty morning, and happened to get a slight scratch on the back of his hand. A single minute's attention to it would have caused it to heal in a day or two. It was neglected. A slight inflammation appeared, which a single poultice would have reduced, but it was neglected. The whole hand became inflamed, and should have had the best medical attention, but it was neglected. The arm and shoulder and back were seized with pain, and now all was alarm and confusion. Twelve physicians were soon in attendance to consult upon a case. The question was, whether the cutting off the limb would save the man's life, and it was decided to be *too late!* The disease had gained a mortal hold, and no human skill could arrest it. A vicious habit, an indulged little sin, a neglected duty, how easily are they taken care of if we are in season with them, but how stubborn and ruinous they become if they are let alone!

Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."
—Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."
—Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON XI.*

BY REV. RUFUS W. CLARK, D.D.,

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THE SOURCES OF MINISTERIAL SUCCESS.

"STUDY to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2 TIM. 2: 15.

I KNOW of no position on earth so full of responsibility, requiring such varied mental and moral attainments, and dependent for success upon so many outward conditions and spiritual forces, as that of the preacher of the gospel. He has committed to him the most vital interests of society—the work of extending the Redeemer's kingdom, and maintaining the honor and worship of God among men. He is called to deal with truths the most solemn and momentous that can engage human attention—truths that demand the highest mental force to be understood; that must pass through the heart to fully reach and move the intellect, and must be accompanied with a supernatural influence, to become the wisdom and power of God, to the salvation of men.

* Preached at the installation of the Rev. William Bailey, Pastor of the Third Reformed Dutch Church, of Albany, N. Y.

In the prosecution of his work he must contend with the deceitfulness and treachery of his own heart; with the natural inward tendencies to indolence, pride, or personal ambition. In seeking to enforce the truth and influence his fellow-men, he must maintain a constant warfare with their prejudices and passions; with the power of evil habits, and the constant action upon their opinions, of out-spoken infidelity and the subtle and insidious forms of prevailing skepticism. He must labor on in the darkness of discouragement as well as in the sunshine of prosperity; sowing the precious seed of the divine Word falling on stony ground, and amid briars and thorns, as well as reaching the fertile soil of a receptive and responsive nature.

Well may we exclaim: "Who is sufficient for these things?"

But, brethren, if God calls us to a work, he will give us the requisite strength to perform it. If the labor is arduous, and the difficulties and the discouragements great, yet he will see to it, and they who go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall return, bringing their sheaves with them.

The gospel ministry has been, in the past, a power. It has been mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin. It has met on the field of conflict principalities, powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, and vanquished them. It has smitten idolatry, purified governments, enlightened nations, planted the institutions of a pure religious faith, and been the means of fitting millions for the joys and honors of immortality.

And the achievements of the past certainly lie within the possibilities of the future.

Let us, then, avail ourselves of the present occasion *to inquire into the sources or elements of ministerial success.*

I. *In the first place, the preacher of the gospel must have his mind stored with knowledge of divine truth.*

The apostle who addressed the words of our text to Timothy, also said to him: Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine . . . Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.

The successful preacher must ever, as well as when St. Paul wrote, devote his life to study, to a critical investigation of the doctrines and teachings of the Holy Scriptures, and to protracted meditation upon the themes that pertain to the government of heaven, the mission of Jesus, and the solemnities of immortality. Accepting, as we do, the Bible as a revelation from God, this is ever to be an authority on which all creeds, articles of faith, and systems of theology must lean. This is the mine in which we must dig for the hidden treasures of knowledge—for the gold and silver and precious stones with which to build and decorate the spiritual temple.

The minister of God must walk amid those sacred histories, that, bearing the impress of inspiration, take him back to the cradling of the human family, and those opening scenes that have the types and shadows of blessings and glories, yet to be revealed. He must have his heart tuned to the melody of the sweet singer of Israel, and catch the notes of those sublime anthems, that a thousand years before Christ's advent celebrated his coming, and inaugurated the principles upon which his great kingdom would be established. He must listen to the bold and earnest prophets until their utterances reach the depths of his soul, kindle his thurst for divine truth, and teach him that the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." He must mingle with evangelists and apostles until their records and teachings become a part of his own intellect—real life; until he can say: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" until he is "able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and length and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fullness of God."

But while the pure and mighty stream of Scriptural knowledge fertilizes the intellect of the preacher, he should not ignore other sources and departments of influence. If he resorts to the gardens of literature, he may meet there the cultivated scholar, whom his own culture may impress, and through which he may convey that knowledge which will make him wise unto salvation.

If he is familiar with the principles of science, he may meet the learned skeptic on his own ground, and convince him that truth, whether found in nature or revelation, is from the same divine source, and should awaken the same reverence and love toward the Author of all things.

In history he may discover the practical workings of the laws of God, and gather, from the career of individuals and the fate of empires, proofs of the moral attributes of Jehovah. Poetry may furnish him with garlands with which to decorate the sanctuary and adorn the altars of religion, and classical learning will aid him in substantiating the truths and unfolding the meaning of the sacred oracles.

And here I may remark that this element of pulpit power is demanded by the times in which we live. The tendencies of society in our day are, all must allow, very rapid from the forms and externals of religion to its vital principles; from ecclesiastical dictation to the moral and intellectual power of the pulpit; every step of advancement in education, every quickening influence that the community receives from the progress of the sciences and improvement in the arts, only increases the labors and responsibilities of the pulpit. As in our country, especially, the pulpit has, from the earliest periods of our history, acted directly upon the people, forming their tastes as well as their

moral character, promoting general education, and aiding in giving character to our literature; so the community is now reacting upon the pulpit, and demanding that its active spirit and its thirst for knowledge be satisfied. And while we have among our auditors those who, equally with ourselves, have access to every department of literature and science—men skilled in argument, and able to present their views in an appropriate and forcible diction; while the press is teeming with works upon all subjects that find their way into every family, and while at the bar, in the legislative hall, the lecture-room, and the public assembly, thousands are swayed by the power of thought, and the magic of a resistless eloquence—the pulpit can not fail in intellectual ability, without losing its influence and sacrificing the high interests which it was instituted to defend.

II. *Another element of the preacher's success lies in presenting truth to his audience in its argumentative and doctrinal forms.*

Declamation may move the sensibilities, exhortation may excite the feelings, but it is the pressure of the great principles of God's rod against the conscience—by the repeated assaults of vigorous argument, accompanied by the power of the Spirit, upon the citadels of iniquity in the soul—that the hearer is led to repent and believe.

It was when Paul *reasoned* of righteousness, temperance, and a judgement to come, that Felix trembled. It was when Edwards assailed the conscience with successive and powerful arguments, that he gained the victory. Pursuing a chain of reasoning that held his auditory, almost without the power of resistance, to the great truths which he was laboring to establish, he destroyed one refuge of lies after another, at the same time making this chain an electric conductor that flashed conviction upon the heart.

In reading his discourses you are irresistibly borne along by the torrent of argument that he pours forth. He follows you through all the labyrinths of a subtle skepticism—through all the windings of the most acute sophistry—and in attempting to withstand his reasoning, you find yourself struggling against the very word of God, that is "the fire and the hammer that breaketh the flinty rock in pieces." With him, as with every other profound reasoner, the sphere of action—the battle-field, so to speak—is transferred to the hearer's own mind, so that the conclusions to which the truth drives him, seem to be his own conclusions. There is a voice within that responds to the sentiments uttered, that declares in tones that can not be disregarded that this is truth—God's truth—eternal truth.

One secret of Robert Hall's power was the masterly workings of his reasoning faculty in elucidating the subject before him. With a penetration that enabled him to see all the ramifications

of his subject, even to the minutest fibers; with a grasp of mind that enabled him to summon before his mental vision all the arguments, process, and bearings of the truth under consideration; with a power of abstraction which fastened his attention upon every point, until, from the intensity of the gaze, his soul was on fire with the theme—he was prepared to go before his audience and overpower them by the weight of his arguments and the force of his conclusions. Nor were his reasonings—profound as they were—dry, cold, and speculative. They came warm from the heart. They were charged, as it were, with emotion and passion, and though sometimes fierce, were often solemnly impressive—"at all events," says one, "seeming to show that strong argument may be worked in fire as well as in frost."

The doctrines of Christianity constitute its substance and strength. They form the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night that have led the hosts of Israel through dangers and difficulties to the promised land. And the preacher should render the doctrines so conspicuous that they should be the first objects to attract the gaze of the inquirer after truth. As the pyramids, in their silent grandeur, loom up in the far distance to the traveler, inviting his approach, and guiding him in his path, until he stands at their base, awe-struck by the sublimity of the scene, and overpowered by the consciousness that he is gazing upon imperishable monuments that date far back into an unknown antiquity; so should the traveler to eternity be led to gaze upon those imperishable truths that have come to us from the Eternal Throne, and which are our only guide to heaven and happiness.

III. *In the next place, it is essential to the preacher's success that he present the truths of the gospel in their systematic affinities and harmonious relations.*

Although we have not set forth in the Scriptures a complete logical system of doctrines, yet the more minutely we examine the truths presented, the more clearly we see their harmony. Evidences accumulate as we advance that they are parts of one grand whole. It is true that some points stand out more conspicuously than others. Over some there still hang the clouds of mystery. But enough is seen to convince us that when the mists shall have been dissipated by the light of eternity, then the system will appear in all its symmetrical beauty and glory.

It is also evident that all the doctrines and precepts of the Bible are revealed for one and the same purpose, namely, to lead men to repent of sin and exercise faith in Christ as the Saviour of the world. The doctrine of divine sovereignty and that of man's free agency; the duty of all men every where to repent, and our dependence upon the Holy Spirit for conversion and sanctification; the invitation and warnings of the Scriptures; the prom-

ised rewards of heaven, and the threatened woes of hell—are all revealed because Jehovah takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but had rather they should turn from their evil way and live. And the preacher who presents one class of truths to the exclusion of another class, or who so presents a truth as to leave the impression that the Bible is inconsistent with itself, and so lessens man's obligations to obey the commands of God, fails of his duty, and fails of success in his work. It is as much a part of his business to trace out and present the affinities and relations of doctrines, and to show that they all bear the impress of infinite wisdom and benevolence, as to understand their individual import and enforce their separate claims.

Heresy often springs from pushing a particular doctrine beyond its proper and true boundaries. One may so elucidate and present the doctrine of the divine Unity, as to ignore the doctrine of the Trinity. Or, the Trinity may be so explained as to obliterate the idea of the divine Unity. The doctrine of predestination or election may be so preached as to inculcate fatalism and discourage the sinner from taking a single step toward the exercise of repentance and faith. On the other hand, human ability and free agency may be so presented as to lead the hearer to feel that he can safely delay attending to the interests of his soul, and at any moment, in the future, turn to God with the expectation of receiving pardon and salvation.

It is true that the gospel is a savor of life unto life of some, and of death unto death to others. It is true that many hear of the precious Jesus only to reject him; and that the god of this world hath blinded the minds of men, so that they can not or will not see the light. It is a most melancholy fact, that multitudes rush into the presence of Jehovah, unprepared for the fearful realities of the eternal state. But all this does not militate against the grand central truth of the Scriptures, that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." That truth I find in its germ, wrapped up in the promise made to our first parents. I behold the ancient patriarchs walking in its light, and prophets inspired to depict its coming glories. I trace it in the writings of the evangelists, and in the comprehensive and glowing arguments of the apostles. I see it shedding light upon a lonely isle; showering visions upon the devout spirit of an exile from the Christian faith, and culminating in the precious invitation recorded upon the last page of the Book of Revelation: "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the waters of life freely."

This statement that we have quoted harmonizes all moral truth. Toward it flow all the doctrines of Christianity, and from it emanate all the duties of religion. Under its inspiration I have only

to go forward and work out my own salvation with fear and trembling, encouraged by the blessed assurance that it is God that worketh in me, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure.

IV. *It is also essential to the successful preacher, that he cordially believe and love the truths and practice the commands that he inculcates upon others.*

His character, as well as his voice, must preach the gospel. He must live Christianity, if he would be the instrument of imparting its power and blessedness to others. He must possess the Spirit of Jesus, if he would lead men to yield their hearts to him. To enforce the apostolic epistles, he must be himself a living epistle of divine truth, known and read of all men. Nor can the highest attainments in any other or all other departments make up for the lack of these qualities. One may have his intellect richly stored with general knowledge, classical literature, and theological learning; he may present the truth with all the beauties of rhetoric, the force of logic, and the glow of eloquence, and yet, without the spiritual unction that flows from the soul of piety it will fall powerless upon the hearer. But if there is added to the elements which we have already considered, a pure religious fervor, that is kept alive by constant and intimate communion with God; if there is a love for Jesus that takes possession of every faculty of the soul, absolves every passion, and fires the spirit with a holy ambition to make the most of study, labor, and life, for God and the immortal interests of man—then no sophistry can evade the arguments of such a preacher—no indifference or hostility can resist his assaults, and no conscience sleep under his heart-searching appeals.

There have lived such ministers of God—men who walked with Jesus before they preached his word; who have made their preparation on the Mount of Transfiguration; who have depicted the attractions of heaven, aided by blessed foretastes of its joys; who have passed through the whole system of Christian doctrine, the light of a most precious religious experience. Those who listened to the devout and godly Whitefield could not fail to perceive, as he advanced, the fires of deep emotion kindling in his soul, and pouring forth through all the avenues of his physical and spiritual nature. The spirit within him flashed from his eye. It breathed forth from the varied expressions of his countenance. It escaped from the tones of his voice, from every movement and gesture. It glowed in the warmth that was diffused over his whole frame. It enveloped him in a bright, etherial cloud—a cloud that seemed impregnated with inspiration. We are not surprised that Hume walked twenty miles to hear him. We are not surprised that thousands flocked around him, and, under the spell of his eloquence, presented the sublime spec-

tacle of a mass of human beings, with but one heart beating among them, and that the burning heart of the speaker.

Now, the age in which we live demands such a ministry—one with knowledge, force, and eloquence, permeated with a lofty religious enthusiasm, and inspired with the spirit of entire consecration, to the service of our divine Master.

With the wide fields of usefulness that are open all around us; with the preparation for the reception of the Word of God, made by the prevailing system of religious instruction; and with the facilities that exist for reaching communities and nations—such a ministry might reap the most glorious harvest ever gathered into the kingdom of God.

Into this age of ours flow all the quickening influences of the past—the achievements of heroes, the lessons of history, the inventions in art, the discoveries in science, and, above all, the victories of Christian faith over error, Christian civilization over barbarism, and the light of God's truth over the darkness of human depravity.

The intense activity of thought that pervades every department of knowledge; the earnest enterprise that throbs through the arteries of trade and unfurls the sails or works the engines of commerce upon every sea; the revolutions that are heaving the foundations of systems of iniquity, and redeeming nations from crimes that have periled their existence—all bear the impress of forces that have long been working in society, and are now culminating toward the final victories.

Said a Hindoo to an Englishman: "Our iron sinks; you build yours into ships, and yonder it swims! Our wire is silent; yours talks in the air a thousand miles away! Our fields bring nothing to us but wheat; you open the sod, and lo! coal is beneath it. We have journeyed for ages on foot, or in palanquins; you ride in chariots snorting fire!"

To direct aright such energies; to purify the springs of power that are bursting forth all around us; to marshal the forces of enterprise, and national progress, and achievement, so that they march to the music of the divine law, and under the leadership of the Author of Christianity—requires a ministry full of spiritual life, inspired with a heroic devotion and eloquence, not only in speech, but with all the virtues of the Christian faith.

Finally. The minister of the gospel must feel his dependence upon the agency of the Holy Spirit for success in his work. Through this agency he is taught what to preach, and upon it he is dependent for the growth of the seed planted in human hearts.

Paul says: "We have received the spirit which is of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God; which things we speak not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

Again he says: "Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God alone giveth the increase." In these passages there is a recognition of the threefold agency of the Spirit of God—in imparting and unfolding truth to the mind, in guiding the preacher in the manner of presenting truth to others, and in rendering it effectual in moving the hearts and consciences of men.

If the first is secured, the other two naturally follow. If we who are called to teach men can ourselves be taught by the Holy Spirit; if we can gaze upon the principles of Christianity and the hopes of the gospel, and the relations and splendors of the future life, through the light imparted by this divine Person of the Trinity, then may we expect to have our utterance inspired by the same Spirit, and a preached gospel made the wisdom of God and the power of God unto the salvation of men. Then can we say to our fellow-men, and say it as did St. Paul, with a living power: "Now then we are ambassadors of Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." It was this Spirit, filling the soul, quickening the intellect, and taking possession of all the affections, that gave to St. Paul his marvelous success.

Then the light flashed across his path and arrested his progress toward Damascus—a purer light than its radiance upon the system of divine truth, bringing out its force and beauty, and prompting him to ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" His natural eye was blinded for a season, but the eyes of his understanding were opened, so that he could discern spiritual things. He had been educated in the past in the principles of the Jewish faith. He now commences his education in the Christian faith, under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, commissioned to take of the things of God and show them unto him. He sees, for the first time, that while the law came by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. He sees the perfect harmony existing between the two systems, and how the former prepared the way for the latter. Looking back, he penetrated forms, and saw the substance; penetrated types and symbols, and grasped the truth a fact signified. He could see all that patriarchs had hoped for, or lawgivers had commanded, or prophets had spoken, centering in Him who said, "I am the light of the world." He saw the future civilization with its blessings, a rising spiritual kingdom on the earth, life and immortality streaming from its central orb of light and power. As he advanced, the bright visions of truth would fill his soul and lead him to exclaim: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

He felt, too, the promptings within, to make known the precious truth to others. "Unto me is this grace given, that I shall preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Often he desired that others might share in his rich experience, and he

would pray, as he did for the Ephesians, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

Every page of his immortal epistles glows with truths spiritually discerned—with doctrines unfolded to his intellect and impressed upon his heart by the Holy Spirit. At times the truths are so intense, vivid, and far-reaching—the human views mingle so extensively with things celestial and divine—that the writer fails to express them fully to others. Thought escapes language; imagination soars far above imagery; aspiration meets inspiration, and in the third heavens beauties and glories are seen which it is but possible for human lips to describe.

Let the ministry of our day catch the spirit and acquire the knowledge of divine truth that filled the soul of this earnest man, and every pulpit would be a center of spiritual power; every altar would receive sacrifices from ten thousand hearts; and from every church there would go forth streams of influence that would make glad the city of our God.

Communities, nations, the world, wait for the development of this power. When it appears, and becomes general, then will you discern the dawn of millenial glory. Then will the preachers of righteousness be welcomed with the anthem, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publish peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

Then will the watchman lift up the voice and chant the inspiring words: "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

May Heaven grant that the ministry inaugurated in this pulpit to-night may receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and that our beloved brother may have the satisfaction of seeing this people built up in the most holy faith, and prospering in all spiritual gifts and blessings, and this church a gateway to the everlasting city to many precious souls!

SERMON XII.

BY REV. E. H. GILLETT,

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WHAT IS DUTY?

"THESE things ought ye to have done."—MATT. 23: 23.

THE word *ought* implies duty. Is there such a thing as duty? Is there any thing that should have control of a man above his own personal interest—above his pleasures and his tastes?

Thousands live as if they fully believed there was not. They are governed by self-interest. The great question with them—the maelstorm that swallows up every thing else—is, What will contribute to *my* gain, to *my* pleasure? The world they live in, and the world they live for, centers in *self*. The morality—if they are moral—is a matter of education or taste. Not to be honest would be a loss of reputation or standing. Not to be sober would risk health and success in business. All their virtue is simply natural amiability, or a matter of habit or calculation.

Such men often go through the world with a fair reputation, and do some good on their way—good, however, not of the kind that springs from design, or holy purpose, but good like that of the wheel in a piece of mechanism—for God's providence, without reference to their own plan, makes them wheels in the social organism. Sheltered by honorable associations, the tornado of temptation spares them. They stand visibly upright to the last, and no stain attaches to their names. But have they answered the end of life? Have they been governed by right motives? Have they built on the rock, or on the sand?

Sometimes they give back an answer themselves which contradicts their life. Sometimes, as remorse coils its folds about their sinking frame, they confess with inward agony that they have committed a great and life-long mistake. They spurn as mockery the boothing flattery that they have been upright and moral. The memory of their self-indulgence is to them like the handwriting on the wall. They see nothing high or noble or pure to redeem their life from the blight of a wasted probation.

And yet men will say, If I interfere with no man's rights, may I not consult my own convenience or pleasure? May I not do what I will with my talents, my time, my wealth? What good will it do me to be a hermit, or an ascetic, to crucify ease or comfort or taste by self-denial?

Well, let us suppose that a man need recognize no law above

his own convenience or interest. What one may do, all may do. Duty is dispensed with. No man asks, What ought I to do? There is no *ought* in the case. Every man's interest, taste, or pleasure is his rule. What follows? What is the result in the family, in society, in the State? You have dissolved the whole framework of social order. The parent neglects the child, and the child disobeys the parent. Every brother is a Cain, every mother is an Herodias, every neighbor is an Ishmael. Will you remonstrate against this? How can you do it? You must appeal to that obsolete principle of duty. You must recognize the fact that we are not independent of one another—that we owe to one another, without respect to what we receive, love and service.

Introduce the principle into the State. It reveals every law, for civil legislation is swallowed up by individual caprice. It reduces social order to chaos. It inaugurates anarchy and revolution and endless civil feuds. It sanctions tyranny, and theft, and murder, and the will of the strongest. Ambition, avarice, and revenge abolish courts, and bludgeons and pistols take the place of sheriffs. And what becomes of patriotism? The State can not claim that a man should forego ease or personal gain, to serve either in its councils or in its armies.

But this is not all. If there is no such thing as duty, no promise is binding, no oath is inviolable. Why should a man observe truth or justice if there is no such thing as moral obligation independent of taste or interest? And without truth between man and man, where is society, where is the State? The drifting sand, every grain independent of its fellow, is cohesion and solidity itself, to a system in which every ruler is a Nero and every subject an Ishmael.

Yet all this flows forth as the legitimate result when you dispense with the cement and the authority of duty. The veriest despotism that barbarism ever constructed could not hold together an hour without some respect for the obligationsof duty. The Dey of Algiers, or evey the King of Dahomey, is forced, in spite of the fiendliest passions, sometimes at least, to keep his promise, to fulfill his engagements.

There is, then, such a thing as duty. There is something which claims the right to govern a man, above his own taste or caprice or interests. Nay, his own nature, seared and flawed by sin till it threatens to crumble to absolute corruption, is still—like the rock interfused with silver—veined with conscience. In spite of the most confirmed and desperate depravity, the soul bows unconsciously before the majesty of the truth it hates, and Felix trembles at the look of his prisoner, even while his words mingle their tones with the clanking of his chain.

If you examine piecemeal a steam-engine, in its operations, you come to what is called the governor, which is designed to regu-

late the engine in all its motions. You have no more doubt of its design than you have of the existence of the engine itself. So if you take the human mind to pieces you find that this—infinitely more curious and complicate than any structure that human genius ever contrived—has its governor also. It has that which assumes to guide and judge and control all a man's actions—that which grasps the helm of the mind as unhesitatingly and boldly as the captain of a vessel directs how it shall be trimmed—issues its orders, as it were, in conscious mastery—looks the soul in the face when it yields to low, base self-interest, and says: "You mean, dastardly wretch! blush to hold up your head among decent men." That governor is the human conscience. A man may not like its control or company. He may abuse it, and violate it, and spurn it, and stupify it with vice and drunkenness; he may put it under the heel of his lusts, and bore out its eyes with sophistry, and smother its voice with the loud tones of revel; but—torn, bleeding, dishonored, gasping in whispers—it lives yet, and it claims its rightful throne, and it maintains still the tone of a king; and sometimes it flings off all the murderous lusts that trampled on it, and rises up like a giant to reassert its control over a wrecked and trembling nature. It can not be destroyed. It can not be exiled. To the very last, when the flesh crumbles, and the limbs shake with weakness, and reason itself is ready to give way, conscience speaks in the soul with a voice as much more authoritative than all other voices as God's thunders are louder than human revels.

And whence is conscience? Is it an accident? Was it dropped in as a fragment to fill up the seams or round out the intellectual or social nature of man? Nay; is it not the very substance of our moral nature, and does it not bear as plainly the stamp of design as the governor in a steam-engine? And was it not put there by the great Builder, and does not its very presence declare louder and plainer than words that man, in all his faculties, tastes, sympathies, and purposes, is to yield to its control? It is the constitutional sovereign of the empire of our faculties. To disregard it, is treason; to disobey it, is rebellion. To set up pleasure, or convenience, or gain, or personal or selfish interest, in place of it, is to dethrone the rightful monarch; it is, as it were, to release Barabbas and crucify Jesus.

Man, then, is made under law; he is created subject to the law of duty. That law is supreme. It is as much above lust, passion, and interest as the laws of the United States are above the resolutions of a caucus of secessionists—as the laws of Sinai are above the rules of etiquette at Belshazzar's revels or Dives's feasts.

If any man could yet doubt it, he would only need to compare the results of a life of duty with a life of pleasure—the lofty heroism of a Daniel faithful to his God amid all the allurements of a heathen court, with the selfish aspirations of a Haman climbing

up to swing from his own gallows—the sublime fidelity of a Washington to the sacred trust his country reposed in him, with the baseness of an Arnold selling himself to a golden infamy—the truthfulness of unswerving integrity under whose shadow the wronged finds shelter and the wretched pity, with the trifling, vain, heedless indulgence that degrades a man to the level of a peacock or swine. Placed side by side, even a fool might be struck by the contrast. One is sunlight, the other fog; one is the fragrance of Eden, the other a stench. The study of one inspires and thrills us beyond the note of drum or trumpet or martial strain; the sight of the other makes us sick of human nature. We turn away as from a slough of filth and loathing. Yet one is duty incarnate, the other selfishness gone to seed.

The great question, then, which is to determine the plan and destiny of a man's life is this: Shall I yield to the supreme law of duty? Shall I bow to the mandate of conscience, and of God speaking through the conscience? Shall I put base or selfish interest foremost, or shall I simply ask, "What ought I to do," and make the answer final?

On that decision depends more than pen can write or tongue can tell. On that hinge the results of probation and the issues of eternity. By that is to be determined whether these years shall be carved into the statuary of noble and godly deeds, or whether they shall be ground down to the sandy rubbish with which Satan strews the pathway of blinded thousands to hell—whether your example shall be a moral lighthouse which the storm-tossed shall see and bless, or a rocket, whose charred remnant shall be trod under the heel of contempt, even by its once admirers—whether you will mount upward or sink downward—soar or crawl—be Godlike or beastlike—be the world's benefactor or its curse—grow up to the stature of a sanctified manhood, or be dwarfed and shriveled to the littleness of base and selfish aims.

Can any man hesitate with such a choice before him? He might almost as well hesitate between an angel's crown and a felon's cell, between the benediction of Heaven and the agonies of despair.

And now the question meets him, What is duty? It is not a difficult one to him who is ready to deny himself and take up his cross—to one who has made up his mind fully to shrink from no task which he *ought* to meet—to him who stands resolved to thread every deed and thought on the string of right. Such a man will soon find that all authority centers in the will of God, that morality has its true and eternal basis in religion, that he must not begin his course without first asking, What do I owe to the great Being in whose hand my breath is, and whose are all my ways? And he can not long consider this without being led to feel how grossly he has sinned already, and how much he needs the pardoning love and grace of God.

And then may he find in the volume of God's revealed will a release from all his difficulties, and a solution of all his doubts. He will find provision made for all his need. The path of duty will open before him, and he will see that its very starting-point is just where the penitent sinner bows in humble confession before the cross of Christ.

SERMON XIII.

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THE PLEASURE OF GOD.

"AND I will do all my pleasure."—ISAIAH 46: 10.

To most men this assertion is exceedingly distasteful. It shows that God has his purposes, and that they will all be accomplished. Men are willing that God should reign in heaven—that he should control the planets and uphold the earth; but they are infinitely unwilling that he should do his pleasure with *them*.

The fierce cry that comes up from the rebel heart is, Let me manage my own concerns—let not this God have rule over me. "Let him control the great workshops of creation, and dispense to the universe the huge bounties of his hand, but keep him from the throne." Notwithstanding this opposition of men, God still reigns. And he will rule in all ages and in all worlds. He will do all his pleasure. This sentiment of the text is proved:

I. By the testimony of Scripture.
II. By the grand characteristics of God.
III. By the history or his universe.

I. Says Daniel: "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?"

"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying: Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand."—ISAIAH 14: 24.

And, says our text: "I will do all my pleasure." In all places and for ever. Surely if there is a doctrine in the Bible, prominent as the sun in the heavens, it is God's sovereignty as a Ruler.

II. The grand characteristics of God prove that he must do all his pleasure. He is the only self-existent being in the universe—

[illegible] creatures. He is every where present. "Can any [illegible] in secret places that I shall not see him?" Not only [illegible] in accordance with infinite wisdom, mercy and justice, [illegible] omnipotent power to execute these purposes. Because, [illegible] from eternity knew what would come to pass. "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning." In reference to the future, there is neither ignorance nor doubt. He knoweth with certainty; and we must either deny his fore-knowledge, or admit that his plans are fixed, and that he will do all his pleasure. Not that he taketh pleasure in the sufferings of men—his soul abhorreth them. He made man free to choose. He knew that he would choose evil as well as good; and for reasons satisfactory to his own mind he determined to allow it.

III. The history of God's universe proves that he will do all his pleasure.

1. The history of the fallen angels shows it.

When they sinned, God banished them from heaven. "He thrust them down to caverns of despair that never shall be opened, and bound them there with chains that never shall be unloosed." And this was the just punishment of rebellion. But it was the act of a sovereign: for when man rebelled against the same God, and the same punishment was threatened, and the same thunderbolts were prepared, and the same sword was drawn, a voice was heard in heaven, "Forbear, I have found a ransom." Is there a human being dissatisfied with the workings of God's pleasure? Then you are dissatisfied with a sovereignty that spares you and provides for your eternal blessedness, when committing the same sin for which the angels were thrust into the bottomless pit.

2. The history of nations shows that God will do all his pleasure. Those nations most prospered, most arrogant, and most likely to trample down the weak, have toppled over. They have become a wonder and a warning to the nations of the earth, while God has overshadowed the weak and established the feeble.

Nebuchadnezzar was the greatest general, the richest man, and the mightiest sovereign on the face of the earth. He looked out upon the most magnificent city in the world. It was "the golden city, the honour of the whole earth." And yet this mighty king was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and in the days of his grandson his mighty kingdom was swallowed up in the Persian empire. And from that day to this the nation that practised righteousness has been exalted, while the nation, however mighty, that would not serve God, has perished. And the sovereignty of God has been seen in it all. How prominent has been the intervention of God in the birth, infancy, and growth of this nation! Hither the pious fathers. He shield-

ed them from the wild fury of the savage. He helped us in the mighty struggles of the Revolution. He guided us to independence. He gave us our civil and religious freedom. He made us and kept us a Christian nation. He erected here a vast asylum for the poor and oppressed of the earth. Let us, then, trust and serve him, and he will still exalt us. He will bring to naught the madness and machinations of our enemies. He will break every rod and loosen every fetter. Upon the wreck of false systems and base institutions and barbarous habits, he will make of us a glorious nation, whose God is the Lord. Watching and longing nations shall follow in our footsteps. And our regeneration shall be as life from the dead to a struggling world.

3. The history of man proves that God will do all his pleasure. How many things in that history are beyond man's control!—his birth and physical constitution and early training.

One is born to affluence, and is trained to expect the obsequious attentions of those around him. Every wish is gratified, every nod is heeded. He has every facility for physical and social and mental improvement. Every effort is made to shield him from the slightest annoyances of life.

In that same street is born another, who is in every respect inferior. He is the child of a drunkard. He is an heir to woes that no tongue can describe. He is puny in person and feeble in intellect. He shrinks away in terror from a brutal parent that should cherish and love him. He drags his weary limbs from door to door. And he lays his crazed head down to die amid want and neglect and crime and ignorance and eternal despair.

One is born and trained a savage, another a heathen. One is a Roman Catholic, another a Mohammedan. One is a prince, another a slave.

Still another is the only child of his parents, and they are Christians. He is early consecrated to God in baptism. He drops upon his bended knee, and with the hand of a loving mother upon his little head, he learns to lisp the words: "Our Father which art in heaven." Cries go up to heaven in his behalf from that loving, pleading heart. He is trained to be a disciple. He is converted to God. He spends his life in toils for Christ. And having been a joy to friends and a blessing to his race, he sleeps in Jesus and wakes in heaven.

All these different persons have within them a consciousness of right and wrong. They are free to learn and to choose. If they do wickedly they will be punished in accordance with the light which they may have. "For he who knew not shall be beaten with few stripes."

And yet how stupendous is the difference! And God has allowed it. Let no man here complain of God's sovereignty, but rather praise him from a full heart, that he has made you to differ

from those who have been given up to poverty, superstition, degradation and crime.

The plans of men depend for success upon the pleasure of God. No man can control results that are future; for these results may depend upon a thousand incidents that can neither be foreseen nor avoided. How many of our projects are depending upon the clouds and the winds! Napoleon once said that Providence was on the side of the best-served artillery. But he found himself mistaken. It is believed that if he had commenced the battle of Waterloo according to his plan in the morning he would have won the victory before noon; but as the rain had soaked the cultivated fields, he could not move his artillery until mid-day. At four o'clock Blucher arrived with thirty thousand men, and turned the tide of battle against him. That rain, probably, settled the destiny of Bonaparte, changed the map of Europe, and deeply affected the condition of civilization and religion. The fatal epidemic depends upon the condition of the atmosphere. Whole fleets are driven to the bottom by the tempests. The harvests of a whole country are ruined by the insect, the rot, or the drought. This country is said to have lost ten millions of dollars by a recent frost. The lightning and the flames are the winged messengers of God. Men talk of their water-works, their fire-engines, their fire-proof buildings, and their insurance companies, and they feel secure—they can take care of themselves. But suddenly the cry of fire is heard. Driven by furious gales, it flies from building to building. Clouds of flame are whirled through the streets. Then comes a terrific explosion. Broken beams, bales of goods, and the limbs of men are flying through the air. Men stand aghast, while whole blocks and sections of the city—millions upon millions of treasure—fly away toward heaven and are lost forever. Marble dwellings and princely shops are but blackened masses of smouldering ruins. Banks and insurance offices all together fail, and "the assertion is wrung from the gaping multitude, God was there." God was always there. For ages he had averted the devouring flames.

Man, then, may possess the most consummate wisdom, he may plan the most brilliant schemes of pecuniary profit and personal advancement, and yet he may fail. Like Pharaoh, Absalom, and Haman, men, everywhere, are doomed to disappointment.

The conversion of men depends upon the pleasure of God. God has provided salvation for all his accountable creatures. He has given to all the power of securing it. He desires that all should have it. And yet he allows some to reject it, while he induces others freely and earnestly to seek it. Every Christian must exclaim with the apostle, "By the grace of God I am what I am. This position is established by the whole history of the church. How often have we seen it in revivals of religion! A solemnity pervades the entire community. The thoughts of men

are upon their sins, upon the judgment, upon eternity. The salvation of the cross is transcendently precious. Jesus is the "chief among ten thousand." Christians agonize and angels exult. We look for the conversion of numbers whose prospects seem to be most hopeful. But while some of them wait and reason and doubt and reject salvation, and finally wonder and perish, others, who had seemed to be the most thoughtless and the most hopeless, hasten to the cross of Christ and take the kingdom of heaven by force. And when the question comes, "Why is it so?" the answer is, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

In saying that the conversion of men depends upon the pleasure of God, I do not mean that he converts men by almighty power, without the use of means; or that he moves minds and worlds by the same force. Saul of Tarsus was arrested in his course by miraculous power; but he was converted by the Word and Spirit of God. He was made willing, in view of motive, in the day of God's power. He was free and active in his choice of Jesus.

Neither do I mean that he made some on purpose to be destroyed. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." It has been truly said that "God will never illumine heaven with his glory, and fill it with his praise, by sacrificing helpless, unoffending creatures to eternal torment. He will never finally punish one until he is perfectly convinced himself, even to the satisfaction of the universe, that he really deserves it." But I do mean that God, by his providence, ministry, church, Word, and Holy Spirit, does, in his mercy, lead some freely to accept of pardon; while, in his justice, he leaves others to reject these same means to their own destruction.

The pleasure of God will be accomplished in the death of his creatures. How strangely and unexpectedly do men die! They guard against the approach of death in one direction and it comes from another. It comes with the cold, the fever, the consumption; with the sun, the rain, the wind; with the storm, the sleep, the insect; with the ride, the walk, the sail. Disease is lurking everywhere. It is creeping, unseen, over the strongest frames. Men die instantly from the accident, the bullet-shot, the apoplexy. We are in perils everywhere. Millions sink down, like lead, beneath the stormy waves. Others are floating down our inland rivers, by the side of green banks and singing birds and busy towns. Even they are wilted by the scalding steam or driven overboard by the devouring flames. Others are journeying in the cars. Without warning there is a sudden crash. The car rushes toward them in fragments. They are tossed in the air like chaff. Cars, baggage, engines, and human bones are crushed together in one hurricane of destruction.

Here is a man for whom the grave is opening. What is he do-

ing? Is he seriously reflecting? Is he deeply anxious? Is he bowed in sorrow? Is he seeking forgiveness with fear and trembling? Is he taking the kingdom of heaven by force? Oh! no, no. Turn here. This mighty throng, with anxious brow and flushed face and quaking heart: they are struggling onward in search of wealth and fame and pleasure. And see *that man*. He has not a moment to think of death. He is in the foremost ranks. He leads the van. He rushes forward. And hark! Those clarion sounds! He is shouting "Victory!" A neglecter of God, a despiser of his ways, what thinks he of death? His companions fall. He hears the sigh, the dirge, the funeral bell. But he is strong. Here is a grave opening before him. He sees it. He turns to avoid it. He tries to leap over it. But a destiny is on him—a strong hand guides him. Like a man pierced on the battle-field, a dart from death's quiver, aimed from the throne of God, reaches his heart. He trembles. He falters. He sinks down into that open grave. He is buried up. The heedless throng tramp down his new-made grave and hurry on. "Yesterday the golden tints of morning were reflected from all his possessions. To-day, midnight's dark and dreary pall spreads its sable folds on everything he owned."

You, too, will die. Your days are numbered. Your grave will open. The time and the way of your death are already settled by the pleasure of God. The breath of your nostrils is in his hands. When you breathe, he gives you the power. That power will fail; those lungs will cease to heave, that heart will cease to beat; and you will die—die in God's time, die in God's way.

Rem. 1. This is a most delightful doctrine to the Christian. You remember the time when you were bound in the chains of sin, and were dragged onward as a slave of Satan. God in his sovereign pleasure has broken those chains and brought you deliverence. You will still have conflicts and trials. You may meet with poverty, loss, and derision. You will pass alone through the valley of death. How sweet to lie in the arms of Jesus!—to see his smiling face—to hear his soothing words, "My peace I give unto you!" Through all your course it is a source of unutterable delight to your soul that God will do all his pleasure.

We see nothing in this subject to discourage the turning penitent. The teaching of the whole doctrine is, that the result of all your business is in the hands of God. Do you, therefore, give up business? Do you relinquish all efforts to acquire property? Or do you labor on, trusting in God for success? You trust and toil on, though God has not left a single promise that your wisest and brightest plans shall positively insure success.

Your encouragements in seeking Christ are infinitely superior. For here God does promise; that is a part of his glorious sovereignty—the corner-stone of his immutable government; he does

promse everlasting salvation to your soul, if you believe on Jesus. He has not said that you shall surely be rich if you strive ever so industriously; but he has said, Seek and ye shall find, repent and you shall be forgiven. Is that bad? Is that discouraging? Is that reprobation? God's sovereign pleasure is a system of mercy —mercy through Jesus Christ. It is all mercy. "There is not a drop of reprobation in it." If you resist it, and fail of heaven, is it not your own fault? Can you reach perdition without passing directly by the cross of Christ and the open gate of heaven? Talk, then, as we may about decrees, and election, and God's sovereign pleasure, we shall never perish through any fault of God's.

We see the unreasonableness of opposing the sovereign pleasure of God. Should he not rule what he has made and what he sustains? Men, says a distinguished divine, tell how God ought and ought not to govern. "*Men* from schemes of providence and plans of government opposed to God. But what are they opposing? Thoughts of the great Eternal—plans of an infinite mind that fill eternity—projects that are marching on and on, while a hundred generations of these poor simple creatures are swept from the earth and lie mouldering with the worms of the dust." Is not God able to rule his kingdom? Then who is?

Is not He who "layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind," strong enough to govern? Listen to his voice in "the hurricane's wrath, the thunder's roar, the volcano's flames, the ocean's surge, the planet's circuit." These are but mere whispers of his omnipotence. Can all the mad and riotous spirits on earth muster a force that he can not instantly crush? Can all the turbulent fiends in hell raise a tumult that he can not instantly quell?

And does he not know enough to govern?—He who knew the end from the beginning, and pierced time's vista through at a glance. Is he not wise and just and merciful enough to rule? When this earthly paradise was spoiled by sin, he consumated a scheme for saving earth's apostates by sacrificing Heaven's Beloved. Should we govern better?

The murmuring Jews once dictated to him about food. He gave them their desire, and they perished. So at this day. Men storm with wrath, and sigh with disappointment, when frustrated in their plans, when those very plans would have destroyed them. I have known a family murmur at God because they were detained in a journey, when all who went on were either burned or drowned. I have known a man rave with wrath at a disappointment that resulted in his conversion. I have known a sinner who quarreled with the decrees of God. But if the infinite Jehovah had not been absolutely bent on mercy we never should have known but one decree, and that would have been, wrath instant and wrath eternal upon every revolting rebel.

I have known a man curse the God who made him, and long to

hurl him from heaven's throne. And yet had any but a sovereign ruler he would never have writhed in anguish over his sins. He would have slept profoundly that night when he tossed and groaned under the crushing weight of God's burning curse. He would have been madly driving to perdition that morning when his proud heart melted before the cross of Christ. He would have been awfully stupid or wildly alarmed that night when, with an angel's ecstasy and a seraph's rapture, he sweetly died, and slept in Jesus. Yes, but for God's sovereign pleasure, his eternity would have been one long, unending scene of accumulating, torturing anguish. But now his fingers sweep the lyre, his rapturous voice shouts the chorus, and his bursting heart pours forth its wealth of love to that infinite Sovereign who hath done all his pleasure.

Beloved hearer, do you object to the will of God? You can not prevent it. And why do you resist it? Is it not his pleasure to do you good? Do you take his countless favors and forswear your allegiance? Is this manly? Is it noble? How futile and fiendish is this resistance! Do you still adhere to it? Then, "Suppose," said a saint now in heaven, "suppose you come now and deposit here upon this altar all that you have ever received from God. Here lay down your food, clothing, intellect, knowledge, wealth, friends, all, all that you have from him and thus fly away, *alone*, to some wildly-rolling orb, and govern yourself." But so long as you live in his Godlike image, and hear of his loving Saviour, and grasp his infinite bounties, let your heart and voice go up in that sweet melody of heaven: "Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

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Prayers for our Country.

PERHAPS there has never been a period in the history of this land when so much prayer was offered up to Heaven, to that Almighty Being who hears, and who can, in his own time and way, answer prayer, as in these days of deep public anxiety and concern. The day, the hour almost, in the mighty struggle of two armies has come for the mastery and the victory one over the other. The crisis is solemn—it is tremendous. But all is in the hands of God. Ministers and pastors feel it. Christians feel it. Parents and relatives who have brothers, sons, and fathers in the army feel it. They know not the day nor the hour when these loved ones may fall on the battle-field to rise no more. Hence earnest prayer ascends from the pulpit—from the prayer-meeting—from the family altar—from the closet, that God would hear and answer and save. There is a strong faith that God

will hear and answer these earnest supplications, and speedily put an end to this dreadful state of things and this fearful rebellion. So may it be in God's own time and way. Let all praying ones plead earnestly for this most desirable result, and to God be all the praise.

Prayer, Providence, Business.

UNDER the laws of providence life is a probation; probation is a succession of temptations; temptations are emergencies; and for emergencies we need the preparations of the safeguard of prayer. We have duties which are perilous. We meet surprises of evil. We struggle with a wily adversary. We feel perplexities of conscience, in which holy decision depends on the mind we bring to them. We encounter disappointments which throw us back from our hopes rudely. We have difficult labors, in which we sometimes come to a "dead lock;" we do not know what to do. We have an *unknown* experience opening upon us every hour. We are like travelers in a fog, who can not see an arm's-length before them. Providence is thus continually calling for the aids of prayer; and in a soul which is keen in its vigilance, prayer will be continually responsive to providences and anticipative of them.

Are there not, in the lives of us all, moments when, without the formality of retirement to the closet, we feel *disposed* to pray? We are conscious of special attraction toward God. Perhaps with no obvious reasons for "looking up" now rather than an hour ago, we *do* look up. "We *feel just like praying.*" It is as if we heard heavenly voices saying, "Come up hither."

There is often a beautiful *alliance* between providence and grace in these experiences. A Christian who will be studious of his own history will probably discover that often the *occasions* for such fragmentary communings with God follow hard upon these secret incitements to them. Emergencies come soon for which they are needed. The Holy Spirit has anticipated them, and sought to forearm us. Providence and grace thus hover over us, not far asunder.

Pardon and Peace.

A PRISONER, who held a high position in the world, and was a great favorite with the king, was one day brought before the judge, charged with a very great crime. He took his place at the bar with the utmost coolness, and looked at the judge and jury and the crowd of spectators as calmly as if he were surrounded by his friends in his own house. The trial began, witnesses were called up, and gave clear evidence that he was guilty, but still he remained as calm and unmoved as ever. There was not the *least* emotion visible on his countenance, but, on the contrary, his face wore a smile. At last the jury came in, and, while everybody held their breath, pronounced the verdict of "Guilty." In an instant every eye was turned toward the prisoner to see the effect which the sentence would have upon him. And, just then, he put

his hand into his bosom, and laid on the table a *pardon*—a full, free pardon for all his crimes, sealed with the royal signet. *This* was the secret of his peace, *that* was what gave him coolness and confidence in the dreadful position of a prisoner before his king.

Now, just such peace and calmness may we have in the judgment-day, before the great white throne. Jesus our Saviour has died to pay all our debts, and to take away the sins of the whole world, and he tells us all, that he will give a full, free pardon, sealed with the signet of the King of kings, if we will go to him in faith, and ask him for it. And, therefore, if we go to Jesus *now* and tell him that we want this pardon very much, that when we stand before the great white throne we may not be condemned, and cast into prison, he will give it to us.

Do the Work of an Evangelist.

You are the pastor of a church. This exhortation may be made to you. You can do this if you will. Try to preach as well as the itinerant evangelist. You can not practice his arts; you can not captivate by novelty, like him; but you can learn and practice expedients in making your sermons and in preaching, which will arouse the attention, and help you in making deep impressions. Try to interest the people more by your preaching. Determine that you will be a good preacher. Break up the old monotones; vary your subjects more; make your manner of preaching a subject of self-examination and prayer. Many a fault of elocution comes from a wrong state of mind and heart. You can create such an interest in your preaching that people will come to meeting expecting to be interested and moved. Do what you would if you were a popular evangelist, being as you are, a stated pastor with a pastor's influence and advantages. We are not so much an earnest ministry as we should be. Next Sabbath let us try to interest the people more, please them to their edification, gain their attention, make the church feel that God has visited us, and is about to visit them. Unless we as pastors do the work of an evangelist, there will be some plea on the part of evangelists to come and do it for us. We know of no better word of exhortation for a pastor to bear in mind than this: Do the work of an evangelist.

Commit Yourselves.

It is not always best to commit youselves on every thing. In some things it is policy, nay, duty, to keep your own counsels. It might do more harm than good to disclose them. But it is not so in religion. You should always be ready to commit yourselves on the Lord's side—to "give a reason for the hope that is in you." It will strengthen your purpose—your character—and make you a bolder, better Christian; and it will be a great means of doing good to others.

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SERMON XIV.*

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A PLEA FOR THE PREACHING OF CHRIST IN CITIES.

"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."—Acts 11 : 26, last clause.

From a remote antiquity the site occupied by the city of Antioch had been recognized by those who observed it as suitable for the seat of a large commercial town. Lying at the north-eastern corner of the Mediterranean, almost exactly in the angle which the coast of Syria, running northward, there makes with the coast of Asia Minor, running eastward—only separated from the sea by a fruitful valley, twenty miles in length, through which flowed the river Orontes, navigable for the boats and vessels of that day, and having behind it the winding valley between the ranges of Taurus and Lebanon, through which alone, for many leagues, the trade of Asia could find access to the coast—it was marked out by nature for the uses of commerce, and the establishment of a centre of traffic and of wealth. And the wit of man was not slow to detect this, or the enterprise of man to avail itself of it.

Antigonus laid the foundations of a town, three centuries before Christ, not far from where Antioch was afterwards to be. The Greek kings of Syria who succeeded him—instructed, it was said, by sacred auguries, and obeying the indications of an eagle's flight, which had borne a part of the royal sacrifice to some cliffs overhanging the valley and the river — changed the site as well as the name of the town which Antigonus had not finished, established there their capital, and rapidly developed it into a gay and stately city, numerous in population, rich in resources, echoing with industry, thronged with trade, and early conspicuous for its luxury and splendor. By the Romans,

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when they had dethroned the Seleucidæ, and converted their kingdom into a province, this city was still further enlarged and enriched; till, in the age of Augustus, preceding the time to which the text carries us, it was described by Strabo as including already four separate towns, each of which was important and opulent. By Antiochus Epiphanes the fourth of these had been added to the others. A temple to Jupiter Capitolinus had been built upon one summit, and a citadel on another; the ground had been levelled at the foot of mount Silpius for a superb imperial street, extending four miles across the breadth of the town, under continuous colonades; and all the expanse of palaces and squares had been enclosed in a fortified wall. By Pompey it had been made a free city, and such it continued until the reign of the first of the Antonines. Cæsar had built in it an aqueduct and a basilica. Under Augustus, in the day of the geographer, a gay and brilliant suburb to it had been completed by Agrippa. Tiberius likewise contributed to the restoration of those parts of the town which already were ancient, and the improvement of the modern. And even Caligula, that most desperate and brutal of imperial profligates, whose name had become in his own time the synonyme for every insane atrocity, before the dagger relieved the world of his detestable presence had also left his monument at Antioch, in an aqueduct and baths.

So stood the city—"the beautiful Antioch," as the Greeks already had learned to call it; the "Queen of the East," as Pliny names it—'almost an oriental Rome,' when Paul, as summoned from Tarsus by Barnabas, went thither to preach.

The population assembled in it was of course most various, embracing representatives of many peoples. From the first the Jews—in the impulse of that new desire for traffic which, after their return from the captivity in Babylon, had carried them abroad into all the great cities—had settled at Antioch in large numbers; so large, that already in the day of St. Paul they were allowed to be governed by an ethnarch of their own, and to enjoy an equivalent political privilege to that of the Greeks. The Greeks, meantime, in that spirit of restless and inquisitive activity which contrasted on the one hand the Egyptian immobility, and on the other the habitual reserve and [illegible]ity of the Roman, and which made the Greek the merchant, the

sailor, and the colonist of many countries in the centuries before Christ—the Greeks had firmly established at Antioch their arts, their trade, their festivals, their religion, and had made it as much a Hellenic city as was Ephesus or Smyrna; almost as much so as was Athens itself. The Grecian ideas and habits prevailed in it; and the Greek nature, fastidious but unchaste, always more solicitous for elegance in form than for truth and purity in precept and character, and which seems to have run to excess of riot as it roamed more widely from the ancient seats of its traditions and its ancestors—this, to a great extent, moulded the society and fashioned the forms of Antiochene life. It made that life brilliant and picturesque, but sensual in its philosophy, essentially atheistic in its faith, and profligate in its customs, almost beyond the sad and famous example of Corinth.

But these were not all of the residents at Antioch. They who had come from the Euphrates or the Indus on their immense journeys, with ivory, pearl, spices, silks, ebony, and precious stones, not unfrequently remained there when their traffic was accomplished, and added to all the other elements assembled in the city their oriental lassitude and passion. From the west also, as well as from the east, it derived continual increase of numbers. The capital of one of the great Roman provinces, the residence not of the governor alone, but of other officers of the imperial government, often was fixed there; and the beautiful softness, the proverbial evenness and healthfulness of the climate, drew many after them, who came also from the west, for health or pleasure. Emperors themselves admired the charms of the brilliant town, the 'Gate of the Orient;' and almost regretted, in view of its bright and singular beauty, that the claims of state compelled their residence in the prouder metropolis. Cicero spoke of it, before St. Paul's day, in his defence of the rights of Archias, as a city already long celebrated and rich, abounding in learned men and most liberal studies; and again, when thundering against Verres and his crimes, his majestic invective softened into music as he spoke of the extent and opulence of the kingdom of which it was the capital, and of the exceeding grace and splendor of the royal gifts brought from it to Rome.

Amid such a population, in such a climate, luxurious and ener-

vating, with the vast wealth collected at this centre, and with all that was selfish and sensual in man's nature as yet untouched by the power of the Gospel, the general aspect of the social and public life there developed may be easily anticipated. The manifold rites and shows of heathenism were constantly exhibited, in their utmost viciousness, and their utmost pomp. Nowhere else was the theatre more splendid. The races, and all the athletic games which were cherished by the Greeks, were celebrated at Antioch—at first at intervals, and afterwards regularly—at the public expense, with a magnificence not surpassed on the plains of Elis, or on the great Isthmus. They drew to themselves immense assemblages, and became the scenes of riotous festivity. All ornaments and appliances of the most sumptuous and extravagant epicurean life were there copiously collected. A revenue of thirty thousand pounds, derived from the legacy of one wealthy Roman, was annually applied by the government to the public pleasures. Opulent citizens offered liberal largess to him who should invent or import a new luxury; and the panders to pleasure, of every kind, flocked thither incessantly.

Superstition, as well as sensualism, found its votaries at Antioch; and the steps of those who claimed to declare the Invisible to man, crossed everywhere in the streets the pathways of those who sought to make the present city a paradise of every earthly delight. There were Chaldean astrologers, with their astrolabes and horoscopes; there were Jewish impostors, and professors of sorcery; there were dancing-girls from Persia and Egypt, artists from Greece, athletes from Italy, comedians, pantomimes, singers, wrestlers, the servants of luxury, the priesthood of lust, from every land. And there, in the suburbs, amid the thickets of laurel and of cypress, was that grove of Daphne, 'full of harmonious sounds and aromatic odors,' which Gibbon has described with pleased and lingering luxuriance of phrase, where the most continuous and unlimited licentiousness was prompted and enjoined as an ordinance of piety; where genius and wealth and religion had conspired to make the most delightful sceneries of nature, embellished with the finest and costliest trophies of the later Greek art, a very shrine and temple of perpetual vice.

It was to this city, the very centre of heathenism, the very metropolis of splendid shows and of sensual joys, the Paris of the old

world, without a single one of the names, institutions, sciences, humanities which have given a dignity to the Paris of the new—it was to this city, apparently so utterly and essentially opposed to all purifying influence, so characteristically antagonistic to the Gospel of Christ, that Paul had come, at the summons of his friend, to preach that Gospel; and here, as we are told, they who believed and companied with him were first called "Christians." It is easy to see how the name arose, and why at that precise point of history it first appeared. It was given undoubtedly as a name of derision; and it is natural to remember, in connection with it, that the inhabitants of Antioch were noted in the old world for their scurrilous wit and their fondness for nicknames; traits from which emperors themselves sometimes suffered, and of which, so late as three hundred years after, Julian the Apostate was made keenly sensible. The name, whose early element of reproach has been long since dissociated from it by the progress of the world, was given at just this time to the disciples, because the rapid extension of Christianity, and its progressive interior development, gave occasion for some name by which to describe the new teachers and worshippers, and this was the one most readily suggested.

So long as the apostles had preached to the Jews only, and had sought to convert those of their own race to faith in Jesus as the promised Messiah, there was no need of a special name whereby to describe them. They were naturally recognized by both Greeks and Jews as only a new sect within the ancient Hebrew people. And that habitual and contemptuous aversion which other peoples felt towards the Hebrews was probably but intensified, where it was not displaced by utter ignorance, towards these obscure sectaries. But when they began, as now openly at Antioch, to preach to the Greeks and Romans also, and to gather converts from every nation as fast as they could reach them, admitting them to all the privilege of their communion without the initiatory rite of circumcision, and valuing the Gentiles who believed in Jesus far more than the Jews who rejected and had murdered him—when they began even to turn away from the latter, and to treat them as voluntary outcasts and exiles from the covenant of God's promise—then it was apparent that a new community was there coming into being; a community differing

essentially from the Jewish, in embracing all those who recognized and accepted Jesus as the Lord; a community differing, if possible, more palpably from all heathen societies, in the majesty and spirituality of its doctrines, and the beautiful but severe purity of its rule. And to this community, peculiar and aggressive, organized by its own law, pervaded with its distinctive life, and seeking to extend itself in every direction where travel reached and human hearts and minds were active, was given the Name which was caught from the word that was oftenest on the lips of those who belonged to it.

It was given, it would seem, by the Romans at first; since it is formed after their manner, and since the Jews would never have allowed the prophetic word Christ—which had to them, as it has to us, a sacred significance—to be used in such derision. They had a name too for Paul and his associates, which made this superfluous. They called them "Nazarenes;" and a scornful hiss was on the lip of each Jew as he uttered the word. But as from Herod Herodian came, so from Christ came in like manner Christian, to heathen lips; and doubtless the populace of Antioch caught it, as giving them a new momentary sensation, and Syrian, Greek, and Roman alike became rapidly familiar with the term of reproach. It was to them not morally so offensive as the name of Jesuit is to us; but loaded with a dislike yet more prompt and utter, and a contempt more complete, than this awakens. And the wildest dream of drunkenness or delirium could hardly have seemed to them so incredible as the thought that that name should in little more than two centuries and a half become the supreme title of honor of the Emperor of the World; that the religion it represented should have subordinated the state to its maintenance and extension; and that the word from which came the title whose sneer was so titillating, represented in a mystic monogram, enclosed within a crown of gold, and borne on the top of a cruciform standard, should be revered by imperial armies, and dreaded by their enemies, as the sign by which the empire conquered.

It was an early instance, followed since by multitudes of others, which the ribald wrath of man was made to praise the very whom it sought to dishonor. And looked at thoughtfully, the ct seems almost to hold in it a prediction of His triumph

over all opposition, and the progress of the world towards His millennium.

But passing now from the special consideration of the facts reported to us by the text, you observe that we have in it an incidental but distinct illustration of the primitive method of evangelizing the world. The first disciples and teachers of Christianity TAUGHT IN THE CITIES; and they there PREACHED JESUS AS THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD, with such energy, zeal, and faithful persistency, that they took from this fact their very name among men. These are the points of general truth suggested by the text, and these are the points on which for a little I would detain your attention.

THEY TAUGHT IN THE CITIES. Take Paul's career, in illustration of their method.

At first at Damascus, near which he had been converted, he had naturally remained, both learning and expounding the new truth which had mastered him, and of which he was to be so noble a minister. Thence, after his prolonged sojourn in Arabia for meditation and study, he went to Jerusalem, that there the fierce and passionate persecutor who had haled men and women, delivering them to prison for Jesus' sake, might publicly avow his allegiance to that Jesus, and admonish the nation of his claim on their reverence. From thence, being repulsed by the instant and intense animosity of the Jews, he departed to Tarsus; and thence, at the solicitation of Barnabas, he now came to Antioch, and abode there a year with the disciples, teaching and preaching. His first systematic work as a minister was thus performed in this city, in which 'the lively licentiousness of the Greeks was blended,' says Gibbon, 'with the Syrian softness,' but from which, nevertheless, Nicolas the proselyte had been taken before as one of the seven almoners or deacons, in which the Gospel had been preached by the disciples who were scattered abroad after Stephen's martyrdom, in which the Greeks as well as the Jews had heard its message, and in which Luke was already preparing for his subsequent work as the apostolical historian.

From this city Paul went forth on his first extensive missionary tour, and hither he returned when that was completed. His second journey, on the same great errand, was here in like manner commenced and ended. And the same populous and profligate capital,

now no doubt in all its parts familiar to his eye, was again his starting-point when he entered on that third tour, whose termination he found in the two years' imprisonment at Cesarea. On these very tours for spreading the tidings of Redemption through the earth—all prepared for them as that was by being subjected to one Roman power, and being instructed in one refined language, and by having outgrown every system of heathenism—he preached chiefly in the CITIES. He did not neglect, indeed, the remote rural districts through which he passed. He taught, rather, everywhere; and with the same fervor of argument and appeal, the same admirable aptness and fulness of illustration, with which he preached at Athens or at Corinth, he taught in Galatia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, in the little obscure villages of Lycaonia and of Mysia, among the passes and over the plains of Macedonia certainly, and at length perhaps of Spain. And everywhere he unfolded the true nature of the Gospel, and brought the pressure of his exuberant emotional nature, and of his magnificent intellectual force, to turn men to God as revealed in his Son. But still chiefly in the CITIES he proclaimed Christ's salvation.

At Salamis, and at Paphos, at Philippi, Thessalonica, in the agora and on the rocky Areopagus at Athens, at Corinth, where he abode a year and a half—that wealthy, brilliant, and voluptuous town, the ornament by its splendor, but the scandal for its viciousness, of the world which was enchained by its fascinating lusts; at Ephesus, at Cesarea, again at Jerusalem, again at Corinth, last of all in the imperial city, the great metropolis of learning, fame, riches, power, which drew to itself the obedience of the world, and gathered its tributary streams from all provinces—at each in turn, at this finally, Paul preached to men the Gospel. The intervals were few in his crowded life in which his voice was not heard in some city of the empire. Of the four great centres of the earliest churches, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, Rome, we instantly associate him personally with three, and through his companion Apollos with the fourth.

And the reason for this his method is obvious. It was not a purposeless or fortuitous thing. It was the result of a divine plan, whose wisdom was illustriously shown in the issue. It was not that souls assembled in the cities were more precious than those [redacted] were sparsely distributed on the slopes of Lebanon, or in the

far sequestered valleys where herdsmen tended their flocks in Galatia. It was not merely, though it may have been in part, because he preferred the stir and enterprise of a city like Corinth, to the monotony of village life; or because in the cities vice rose to a fiercer and more riotous exhibition, and challenged more defiantly his intrepid assault. But it was also, chiefly, because at these points, the foci of the state, he met the concentrated energy of heathenism, and encountered representatives of all opinions and manners from all parts of the earth. At them therefore the impression of his truths was most immediate, while from them he could distribute his influence across all lands. The man who was speaking at Lystra or Derbe was speaking usually to those alone who immediately heard him. His words might fall indeed on the quick and responsive mind of a Timothy, who should afterwards repeat and widely proclaim the Gospel they declared. But except in some such extraordinary case, the instructions of the apostle were there limited in their reach to the audience before him. But the man who was standing on the isthmus at Corinth, touched the west and the east; reached Rome with one hand, and Ephesus, Antioch, Alexandria with the other. The man who was speaking from Mars' hill at Athens, had the world for his audience; and when he declared, amid the perfect splendor of those temples before whose very blackened ruins art still bows, that God, who made the heavens and the earth, and who made all the nations of the earth of one blood, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, although they be venerable and beautiful as these, the temple of Theseus and the temple of Mars, the Erectheion and the Parthenon, he was uttering a truth which was certain to be scattered, by the minds which received it and the schools which were before it, for the whole earth to hear. The impression of a scene so eminent as that would never pass afterwards from the thought of mankind. And the truth thus uttered, circulating along the manifold lines of intercourse and of commerce, would not cease to appeal to human hearts till history itself had ceased to be written.

Therefore it was that wisely and well the great apostle took CITIES for his pulpits, and preached in them, chiefly and first, the Gospel which he proclaimed, and which he sought to make universal. And the fruits of this are seen in the rapid extension of the domain of

Christianity, which, before his death, within thirty years from the date of his conversion, from being apparently a mere schism among the Jews, had shown itself a separate and world-conquering power, and had as such become recognized and feared, wherever it was not hailed and accepted. At first it was a heresy at which Pharisees sneered; at last it was a power with which Emperors had to grapple, and before whose onset their tyrannies went down into bloody destruction. And in part this was owing to the method of the apostle. To strike at the centres of trade, of population, of fashion, and of influence—at the points from which all forces radiated, and where one standing could touch the whole series of interlinked provinces—this was not Paul's method alone. It was the wise and inspired procedure of those who wrought with him. And for all time their example remains to those who in faith and in works do follow them.

Antioch itself, that most luxurious and licentious of towns, became the mother of churches for Asia. Ignatius, its chief pastor, represented its faith in the Roman amphitheatre. Chrysostom was born in it, and trained in its schools, and disciplined by the austerities of the hermits who surrounded it, to be the bishop of Constantinople. In the reign of Theodosius, its Christians numbered a hundred thousand. A peculiar school of theology sprang up in it, stimulating to more thorough study of the Scriptures. Its liturgy divided the East with that of Alexandria. It was read and sung, and its canticles were chanted, throughout the provinces inhabited by Greeks. The influence of its patriarch was recognized and felt from Byzantium to the Euphrates.

The primitive disciples taught in THE CITIES; and at each of them they PREACHED CHRIST: with such earnestness and constancy that they took from Him their very name among men. That Jesus of Nazareth, whom Pilate had crucified, was the very Messiah of ancient prophecy, the proper King and Lord of the world, through whom Israel was to rise to its spiritual supremacy, and in whose reign the whole earth should be blessed; that having from the beginning shared the glory of the Father, He, by a true and divine incarnation, had come into the world to manifest God to it, and to introduce into it a new principle and power of spiritual life; that in his *words* God's wisdom was revealed, and in his miracles, God's omnip-

otence; that by his mysterious suffering and death, atonement was made for human sin; and by his resurrection from the dead, the gates of heaven, opened before, were shown wide open, and the luminous pathway to them revealed, along which all who believed him might follow:—this was the substance of the teachings of Paul, and of all the apostles. It was not the Church, and its authority, which they preached. It was not a system of scientific theology. It was the story of the Divine Lord. In it were those transcendent facts—surpassing all fancies and dreams of men, making the very Hebrew expectation, to say nothing of the heathen, look dull and dark before their splendor, exalting the world to new relations to higher spheres, inaugurating an era glorious and final in the history of mankind—in it were these facts, which at first had softened and quickened their hearts, and inspired their minds, and which afterwards they proclaimed as the means of converting and transforming the world.

The philosophy of human nature, and of the Divine being and government, which was indissolubly associated with these facts, and which on the one hand interpreted them, while equally on the other illustrated by them—this, also, was involved of course in their teachings; and its complete and clear exposition constitutes a large part of some of their epistles. But still the facts themselves were their chief theme; to which they ever returned with joy, from which they derived their most stimulating motives, which they found most effective over men's hearts. And therefore they proclaimed them. Before philosophers and soldiers, before governors and the populace, on the crowned and glittering heights of Athens and on the level beach at Miletus, before Paulus, before Felix, and at Cæsar's tribunal, Paul preached of Christ. It was the theme which occupied his soul from the hour when he saw the glory out of heaven, and heard the words in the Hebrew tongue, till the hour when he joined with prophets and psalmists in the song of the Lamb. And in the last epistle which he wrote, just before he was beheaded, to the youthful Timothy, his son in the gospel, he could say, as he looked back on all the course of his earnest ministry, rough with the toils and manifold vicissitudes of an arduous experience, yet brightened all the way by his love for the Master: "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a cr

righteousness, which THE LORD, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. And not to me only," he adds, in that spirit of boundless benevolence which never forgot his brethren of mankind, "and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." His noble course of wise endeavor thus nobly ended, he went from the city which Nero ruled, to the new Jerusalem in which Christ was the Lord; from the prison to the palace; from the service of Christ, to His vision and reward.

In both the particulars which I have thus indicated, and which are suggested by the record of the text, the example of Paul, and of the teachers associated with him, demands, my Brethren, our imitation. And speaking to-night to this Christian Association, on its twelfth anniversary, I have thought of no theme more pertinent, more important, or more practical than this. As they did who were earliest the representatives of Christ, in a world which was set in antagonism to him, and in which all the powers of evil had gained such vast and fixed ascendency, so we who follow them, in these later ages, and in these remote lands, must continue to do, if we would fulfil our duty to the Master, if we would make his Gospel of truth supreme in the earth. We must preach of HIM, by lip and life, by word and book, in churches and through charities, publicly and in private; and must preach Him IN THE CITIES, to which God has brought us, and in which by his providence our residence has been fixed.

We must preach Him IN THE CITIES; for nowhere else is the need of this greater, and nowhere else are the opportunities for doing it more numerous and inviting, and from no other points on earth will the influence of it extend so widely. A new sense of responsibility, and of privilege as well, should be born within us, and should quicken our hearts, as we contemplate the fact.

All the causes which conspired to build up CITIES in the day of St. Paul, to make them powerful as the agents of civilization, or splendid as its exponents, are now operating, remember, with greater energy, celerity, and extensiveness; and are coming to their result in towns more brilliant, and more influential, and hardly less vicious, than those in which his ministry was performed. Take this metropolis in *illustration* of the truth.—Where the narrow Mediterranean spread

forth before Antioch, there stretches before us the expanse of an ocean, to the men of that century terrible and unsearchable, but which, in all its coasts and islands, in the coral reefs that rise through it, in even the sunken rocks which it enfolds, is now known to navigation. And not this only: there spreads forth also, connected with this, that other mightier and less turbulent sea which heaves its tides across three sevenths of the circumference of the globe, and washes shores to which the arms of Antigonus or Antiochus, of Augustus himself, had never sent a single rumor. All the world is thus opened to that out-running enterprise which here has its seat. Every fourth day through the year there come to us voices from the whole area of the inhabited earth. The political, commercial, and social influences which here are established, send abroad in reply their powerful impression.

We have the most marvellous apparatus of instruments with which to assist and to consummate these tendencies. Instead of the few and timorous boats which tardily descended from Antioch by the Orontes, till they tremulously tossed on the Mediterranean, there go from us with every morning those statelier ships that shall wrestle with seas and wildest winds, and from the contest come out unharmed; there go those almost animated ships, more tireless and swift than the old triumphal chariots of the games, within which pants that swarthy giant who rears so much of all that is proudest, and moves so ceaselessly all that is swiftest, in our civilization. And instead of the solitary pass of the Taurus, along whose narrow and rocky defiles the caravans descended to bear to Antioch their scanty burdens, there flow to us through liquid channels, hollowed by man or framed by God, there rush upon us, over ways made level and smooth as floors, in caravan-trains whose tread thunders equal and steady as a star's, from all the expanded districts and states that make the interior, their exuberant wealth.

Here then shall grow—it is inevitable, my Friends, we see already the presages of it—more swiftly than at Antioch, a population more vast, heterogeneous, mighty, and far more effective on the destinies of the world. From every land shall come travellers to this centre. They come already; from Indies, whose messengers never found the Greek cities; from regions more remote than Tarshish and its isles,

or far Cathay. From Southern spice islands, where winds breathe balm, and the heavens sparkle with a tropical brilliancy; from polar snows, where freezing winds chase wild beasts to their lair, and congeal the currents of human life; from both alike they come to us, and daily jostle in our thronged streets. More rapidly, and more variously, shall this great centre be filled with its inhabitants than was possible anywhere before Christ came; till millions shall be needed to compute the population which hardly two generations ago was sixty thousand. Irishmen, Englishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen, Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, Portuguese, Italians, Switzers, Danes, Norwegians, Russians, Hungarians, Turks, Syrians, Egyptians, Chinamen, Africans, South Americans, Sandwich islanders, Singalese—all these are included to-day among the multitudes to whom this city gives room and rest; while the eager and teeming American people, from east and west, from north and south, throws in each year fresh thousands to increase them. Already, it has been estimated, that eighty dialects are spoken in this democratic air; and in six of them, at least, daily or weekly newspapers are published, which have ready sale and a wide circulation. Idolatries have their shrines here, as well as Christianity. The Chinese joss-house confronts the church; and the costumes and the customs of far-scattered tribes are equally familiar upon our streets.

Nor only in population are these cities to grow thus; are they beginning to exhibit this vast augmentation. In wealth too, in splendor, in all that can minister to luxurious ease, and all that can tempt or stimulate appetite, in all that can nurse the viciousness of men, in all that can give commercial power, as swift and great shall be their increase. You see it already. Amid these very years of war the surge of wealth rolls out around us, square after square; and the crests of that wave are mansions so splendid that the princes of Antioch might well exchange their palaces for them. All wealth must be accumulated under free, democratic, and commercial institutions—where production goes on incessantly and most widely, where labor is honorable, where invention is tireless, and where the government of beneficent laws is equal and uniform—all wealth must accumulate with speed, to an extent, impossible in those ages when war was the rule and peace the exception, and when the capricious tyranny of

the despot might at any time interrupt with confiscation and robbery the most orderly progress of the family or the state. Even temporary reverses, which check this advance, and seem to threaten its arrest, are only as rainy days in summer, which howl through the leaves for a little time as if winter had come again, which make the gardens shed their blooms, and corn-sheaves droop their silken tassels, but which pour a fresh vitality through nature, and bless it by interrupting a too withering glare. With only too great rapidity and abundance shall wealth accumulate at these thronged centres of modern commerce.

And with it shall come also art and invention, in their harmonious and connected departments, to be the ministers and interpreters of its tastes, and in turn to train it to finer issues. Institutions of learning, academies, universities, collections of art and every science, libraries, museums, professional schools—all these shall be gathered, not instantly, but gradually, by a law that is spiritual, and yet that controls the forces which it affects as the rule of gravitation draws the stream towards the sea; until immeasurably more ample in all the apparatus and equipment of society shall be these cities, than were any of the age in which Paul preached; and far more influential, wherever the relations of their commerce extend.

Remember, then, how the supremacy of thought over military force is characteristic of our civilization—except in times of rebellion like the present, which have not been before, and which shall not be again till the continent sinks, when the last cannonade which already has commenced shall have signalled their end;—how the ballot takes the place of the bayonet and sabre, and the press is instead of squadrons of cavalry. Remember what means of distributing thought we have and use, of which the ancients had no conception; how every ship that swings out to the main from yonder piers may bear whole armories of the thought of this land, of the thought of this age, between its decks. Remember how languages are being reduced to alphabetical form, more than two hundred of them having already some literary resources; and how interlaced these languages are becoming, so that now most distant and dissimilar nations have certain common forms of speech, while our own ancient English tongue is swiftly gaining a prevalence on the earth even wider than

the Greek had when Paul preached in it. Remember these things, and you see at once how mighty and how wide is the power of these CITIES.

And then remember that behind these instruments and vehicles of thought there stands a people, the majority of it—unlike the mixed and sensual mass of Greeks, Romans, Syrians, Jews, who made the majority of the population of Antioch—united in the sentiment of the authority of justice as between man and man, in the sentiment of reverence for liberty as man's birthright, and of reverence for Christianity as God's revelation, and eager to inform and to transform the world through these ideas; and you see again what an eminent pulpit this metropolis is, in which and from which to preach Christ to mankind. He who preaches Him here, preaches to India, China, Japan, to Kamtschatka and Labrador, to the Society islands, to Borneo and Siam. He sweeps not merely that "many-nationed sea" the Mediterranean; but round the world, on every coast, is felt the far vibration of his influence. 'Not an axe falls in the American forest,' said the English statesman long ago, 'but it sets in motion a shuttle in Manchester.' Not a voice speaks for Christ, we may say as well, in these central American cities, but its echo is heard, sometime or other, wherever the shuttle sends its fabric, wherever the traveller pierces the jungle, wherever the dawn of a Christian civilization begins to disperse the heathen night.

And, finally, to complete this series of suggestions, remember the peril, as well as the privilege, which comes with such vast congregations of men, diverse from each other in origin and in habit, only drawn together by the common attraction of ambition for wealth, and with the force of sin in each perhaps trained and invigorated by his contact with others. The lesson we consider seems then doubly emphasized.—All communities of men need Christianity in the midst of them, for their peace and security, as well as for their culture. A democratic population needs it, if possible, even more than one organized around more ancient and fixed institutions. But of all democratic populations on the earth, not one so instantly and so palpably requires it as does the free, self-governed CITY; where local attachments, and ancestral associations, possess no power; where the *ignorant* and the profligate drift together in swarms, by a natural

gravitation; where multitudes shield in a dangerous obscurity individual ruffians; where the ministers of the law may be the choice of the rabble; and where vice grows always more fierce and more proud through an unchecked indulgence. We should know beforehand that such a city, except as restrained and reformed by the Gospel, would tend to become a very Sodom; and we ourselves have seen that it does so. Your own experience has lately declared it, with a vividness that cannot be soon forgotten. Your own eyes have seen—as men looking down into uncapped craters see vast volcanic waves of fire raging and hissing underneath,—your own eyes have seen what a hell upon earth the finest and foremost American cities may instantly become, when a furious popular passion is excited, when law is set aside and its agents are either purchased or paralyzed, and when the Gospel has gained no supremacy in them. And till you forget your own identity, you will not be likely to forget that fierce lesson. To talk of the duty of making Christianity here prevalent and supreme, in the light of our own experience of its need, seems wholly superfluous. It is talking of the duty of abstaining from social suicide; of the duty of maintaining our civic existence. And the impression of the scenes to which I have referred can hardly pass away, till all the events and the duties of this life have ceased to engage any longer our thoughts.

Look forward, then, and observe that there is nothing more certain in American society, than that many chief forces and tendencies of it conspire rapidly to build up such CITIES; to drain the country for their increase, and subsidize other lands to supply them; to make them proud, powerful, and profligate, the most fitting places in all the earth for the Gospel to be preached in; there is nothing more certain than that all these influences are only to be energized, and made still wider and swifter in their working, by the very war through which we are passing; and that when it has had and closed its dreary day, the CITIES will be found more thronged, more attractive, and more turbulent and passionate than ever before;—and there will be nothing more certain, I think, to every mind, than that the example of the primitive teachers is by us to be followed; that we are to labor to make the Gospel supreme in these centres, with most emphatic and constant endeavor.

We should not neglect one spot on earth. We should not leave an island unvisited, or one remote shore untraversed by the missionary, where zeal can carry and love sustain him. But we should plant first, chiefest, most conspicuously, at the centres of commerce, population, and wealth, at the centres as well of organized sin, all the influences that there can enlighten and purify. As the rays of the sun are concentrated on the focus, till the stubbornest metal melts beneath them, so the efforts of Christians should be combined upon CITIES, with a redoubled and constant energy, till the whole population has felt its power.

The efforts of Christians: and their efforts, you observe, in this one direction of PREACHING CHRIST, as did the apostles; until they also shall be distinguished among men, not as successful in commerce or the professions; not as politicians, as scholars, or as gentlemen, ornaments of society, or props of the state, but as believers in the Son of the Most High, who are aiming to bring the whole world to receive Him.

I open no controversy in this remark—as surely I can have no other relation than one of entire respect and love, of cordial, grateful, and admiring sympathy—with those numerous and greatly beneficent institutions which have sprung into being in a few years past, to relieve in a measure human want; to administer aid and healing in sickness; to give homes to the houseless, cheer to the despondent, instruction to the ignorant, and a refuge to the tempted. All these are not only most useful and noble, in design and in work, they are Christ-like and divine. The very genius of the Christian religion is brightly expressed in them. They are better than cathedrals as its exponents and instruments, and to every thoughtful observer more imposing. Nay, more than this: they are the almost animate representatives of the Lord. Through them the Master still walks the earth, touching as of old the blind and the deaf, releasing the lame and restoring the sick, and unloosing the manacled lips of the dumb; and the series of His miracles, in the spirit they revealed, if not in the very power they involved, is perpetuated in them.

But I have sometimes thought, or feared, that in the midst of such enterprises as these, sublime as they are, and most fruitful of good, while engaged with all enthusiasm and joy in their prosecu-

tion, we might perhaps lose sight to some extent of the primary importance of PREACHING CHRIST; of preaching Him by books and tracts and Bibles; of preaching Him by a personal ministry to the destitute, and by fixed and recurrent public services, in the hall and the chapel, as well as in the church on this His day. This is spiritual, and not physical, in its power and operation; and so we are tempted sometimes to underrate it. It is familiar, and so we forget it, and exalt to a relatively undue importance the more infrequent and impressive institutions. But because it is invisible, it is also more pervasive than any other influence; and because it is silent, and essentially spiritual, it works with the mightiest reformatory energy. It is the life beneath the muscle. It is the power within the mechanism. Nothing can supersede it, for nothing else can fill its office.

CHRIST, as the personal centre of the Gospel, to whom all ancient prophecies point, whom the narratives record and the epistles demonstrate, the Saviour of the world: not a romantic Hebrew peasant; not a mere inspired sage; but the one divine Being who has taken upon himself our nature and life, and has manifested the Infinite by whom we are encompassed;—Christ, as the author and the patron of reform, the perfect example and the constant mediator of all loveliness and virtue; in whom the poorest may find friendship, the guiltiest forgiveness, and the most defiled an inward cleansing; whom angels worship, and saints adore, and whose coming to the earth has crowned its years and lands with glory, and yet who is interested in each of his followers, is their strength in temptation, their solace in sickness, and who comes hereafter to be their Judge; through whom men may be heirs of God, partakers of his nature, partakers of his peace, and after this life the participants of his glory;—HE is to be preached, as uniting in himself all the attributes of God, and reconciling them all with the rescue of the sinner; as offering himself with an equal appeal from the cross and from the throne; at once absolute in law and infinite in pardon; the Lord of the world, and the Leader to the heavens.

There is no other force but this that can penetrate, pervade, and build up society in cities like these, and crowd their surface with benign institutions. The fine ethical schemes have no energy like it; nor have any church forms; nor has any remoter philosophy of re-

ligion. Literature, divorced from it, merely tantalizes or tempts; it cannot inly rectify and renew. All political changes, all social ameliorations, which do not have this for their basis and their instrument, are as fleeting as the seasons, and essentially superficial.

Not only then in churches like this, but everywhere through the town, where men are gathered for business or for pleasure, wherever they have their workshops or their homes, wherever their life drifts forward towards the Future, must CHRIST be preached;—by missionaries in part, but not by them only; by all Christian men who believe in the Lord, and to whom life is given and is precious, that they may thus employ it for Him; to whom speech is given, that royal gift, not that they may fritter and waste it upon sport, or dishonor it by profanity, or debauch it by untruth, but that they may make it vital and noble with the power of Christian truth, and with the force of spiritual feeling. When this is done—when young men rise to the greatness of their office as living and earnest witnesses for Christ, and when by their agency, with that of others, the grace of the Gospel, its infinite truths, its great examples, its incomparable offers are seen on all sides in vivid exhibition, resident and regnant throughout the city—then that city, grow swiftly as it may in population, in power, in importance in the world, will be cleansed and pure in proportion to its growth. The Spirit of God shall reign within it. The kingdom of salvation shall have one of its thrones there. The tidings of life and pardon in the Messiah which there are spoken shall fly from thence, as from a pulpit of stone and gold, throughout the earth, as if an angel announced them in mid air. And the peace, the security, the joy of that city shall be like those which the prophet foresaw in the city whose stones were to be laid with fair colors, and its foundations with sapphires; whose windows were to be of agates, its gates of carbuncles, and all its borders of pleasant stones; for "all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

The apostolic example thus presents to us a duty as binding as that of chastity or of prayer, and as permanent as the tendencies of the world's civilization. Better to sink these cities in the sea, than not to evangelize them. Better to concentrate our force upon them, *than to* spend it on any other province of the earth.

Let me leave then, my Brethren, this single thought with you, as we separate again from this anniversary; and let its impression remain on your hearts through all your future life in the city. "I have spoken unto you, young men," said the apostle, "because ye are strong." I have spoken unto you, young men of this city, because you have faculty, opportunity, spirit, a long and useful life I trust in store for some, for many among you. Be awake then to the greatness of your responsibility; be alive to your privilege; amid these very years of war, to make CHRIST known here more widely, more effectively, than ever before; and in all the more quiet years to come, after the air shall have ceased to be shattered by the echoes of the battle, to still proclaim His word of truth, and still maintain and further His cause, wherever and while the opportunity offers. In the churches with which you are severally associated, be examples to all of Christian faith, in labor, in patience, and in large liberality. No church on earth is designed by the Master to be a mere place of religious enjoyment. Work is its first duty; and enjoyment afterwards, as gained through that work, is its privilege and reward. It is not a Sybaritic retreat from the world; it is a seminary of all good effort. It is a fort, and not a parterre of spiritual flowers; a position in battle, not a play-ground. Least of all is a church in such cities as these, whose daily commerce traverses the globe, whose hourly converse involves the use of scores of languages, whose elements of evil as well as of good are all eager and strenuous, a place for any religious dilettanteism—any selfish, indolent, epicurean Christianity. The largest plans are those most germane to it. The most vigorous effort to accomplish these plans alone befits its place and office. Enthusiasm is for us the soberest reason. Vigilance and self-sacrifice become our customary duties. And every one in such a church should feel that he is in a part of the field of the world where the contest is most urgent, where duty is doubled, and where to fail or to sleep on his post were the fearfulest treachery.

But not in the church only is this work to be done. A Christian man, if once impressed with the theme we have considered, will find means, opportunities, incitements everywhere, to his duty to the Master. He will manifest Christ, and teach men of Him, wherever he goes. In business and in pleasure, in conversation and in life, on the pave-

ment and the pier, as well as in the church, the field is open, the call is constant for his exhibition of the life, the rule, and the spirit of the Lord. Probity in business, to one's own disadvantage, is better than any sermon or treatise illustrating the law of Christian integrity. A sweet and spotless life of love is a new evangel that interprets the old. The man who always honors the Master, in his works as in his words, sings hymns, as did the early Christians, in the workshop and the counting-room, to Him as to God. And he who accepts and fulfils this office, although his voice is not heard in the streets, and the sacraments are dispensed by other hands, is working with apostolic means to fulfil a mission than which the apostles' was not more high. He represents a Master whom the city most needs for its own preservation. He articulates a message which the multitudes around him need more than they need those tidings of victory which they watch for so eagerly; more than the tales of wealth and success which to them make speakers seem 'golden-mouthed;'—a message which commerce shall charge herself with carrying, and which the long and widening civilization that radiates from these centres shall not outlast, and shall never outrun. In the heraldry of heaven, the captains of the earth will have no place of precedence like his, who in these growing American cities has done his part to make the word of Christ supreme. And in the coming illustrious Future, which day by day is drawing nearer, of which each spring is but a witness, and every sunset a new promise, and which holds the immense and immortal reward for all we have here endured and done—to have wrought in this work will be a privilege which the seraphim shall covet; to have died in its performance will have been our coronation!

That such may be your life and work, and such your vast and bright Hereafter, may God in his great grace permit! And unto Him be, now and ever, from all His church, continual praise. Amen.

SERMON XV.

BY REV. CHARLES D. BUCK,
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GOD'S PRESENCE IN THE UNIVERSE OF SOULS.

"WHITHER shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
"If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there."—Psalm 139: 7, 8.

You may think that you already understand these words—that they refer to the divine omnipresence. It is so; and yet the idea here presented is, not merely that *God* is all-encompassing, all-pervading, but this truth in relation to our own individuality. Not simply that he guides the sweep of distant stars, and weighs the atoms of the smallest dust, but that *I*, in society, or in solitude, living or dying, am in perpetual contact with him. Nor can I escape him. "Whither shall *I* go from thy spirit? or whither shall *I* flee from thy presence?"

These questions are intense in their negation, unanswered because unanswerable. But we may well ask ourselves, what feelings do they excite in us? How do we regard them? For they bear, with an immense pressure, on our personal character and our future destiny.

I. Let us then, first of all, consider *our relations to God's presence in this world.*

It is full of him. Nature's various phases are so many thoughts of God, expressed in material form; just as a statue, or a cathedral, is a conception of the artist, embodied in stone. Earth stands like an altar, evolving perpetual incense to the divine glory. That glory glows on all the plains, it is enthroned on all the hills, it broods over all the streams, and in the very air. No one can hold communion with Nature, without feeling she is more than the machinery of the universe, that she *means* more than she says, that she labors and strives to tell us more than just what strikes our senses, that she speaks to our *souls*. Have you never felt it?—that a *spirit* speaks out of nature, glorifying and exalting great truths, to the souls of men, as it does not to their eyes?

It is God's spirit that "garnished the heavens," that "moved upon the face of the waters," speaking, at all times and in so

many different voices, of God's presence. Seneca, a heathen, felt it, as he said: "Whithersoever thou turnest thyself, thou wilt see God meeting thee." David, a Christian, felt it; that even his *thought*, "taking the wings of the morning," the sunbeams (a simile of swiftness beyond all comparison), could not go where God is not. And next to the omnipresence of God, is that of human thought.

But after all, what Nature says to us of God needs to be interpreted and supplemented. The mere fact that God is every where has no moral power, unless we know what God is. Is he a Law, a Force, a Principle, throbbing in all things, visible and invisible, vast, irresistible, inexorable; or, has he personality? If a person, is he indifferent to us and our deeds? Every where seeing us, yet does he *care* about us? Does he note us to catch us in sin, or save us from it? Will he pity us or spurn us?

You will tell me of the fatherhood of God—of his goodness and benignity. Truly, I see in many things his goodness. But I ask, is God *always* good? I see around me many evils; what shall I do with these? Paley says, count them down, and settle the question by the majority of goodnesses. But why any evil *at all* in the government of benevolence, boundless as omnipotence? Can a good God forgive sin, or divorce natural from moral evil? Nature can not tell. No man, who turns from the cross, can tell.

Then God has given us other manifestations of himself: His *word*, to tell us what he is to us, and wills of us; his *Son*, that he *might exercise* his attribute of mercy toward us; his *presence*, "the likeness as the appearance of a man" on the throne above the firmament, and over the heads of all living creatures; while the bow, in covenant mercy, overarches, with mellowing glories, the majesty of the Infinite Jehovah. Only the revelation of God in Christ declares, with the greatest possible emphasis, that the charm and perfection of his holiness is his goodness.

Therefore, being good, God can not be bad. Loving holiness, he can not love wickedness also. Nor does he. Of all things in the universe, sin is most odious to him; for "sin is the transgression of the law." Of all things in the universe, love is the most delightful to him; for, "love is the fulfilling of the law." Side by side with his promises to the loving soul, are his threatenings to the sinner. And that which gives both all their power is, that *God is every where.*

How now do we feel about God's presence in this world? Do we rejoice in it, or had we rather God were out of the way? Do we say, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," or do we cry, with one of old, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory?" This was the cry of a soul not ignorant, by any means, of God's glory, yet who would see *more* of it. So David

desired none on earth besides him. A real penitent never dreads to have God near him. Forgiven in Christ, all aspects of all things are changed. Life's experiences are exalted into a spiritual discipline. God's dealings appear all glorious to his trustful faith. He is reconciled to every attribute of God's character, and *loves* them. He *obeys* God, not lest he should be punished, but because he loves him. He *submits* to God for the same reason, and *rejoices* in his universal presence, as that of a friend and a father!

Oh, how delightful the thought, that the great God is one in whom we can confide! How transporting the thought, we can not go where he is not—that "he will be our guide, even unto death!" And though he must know all our guilt, yet because he knows it all, he has provided a Redeemer from it. *How* Christ saves us, we may never fully know, but we know he does save us. This is enough; if he saves us from our sins, we have nothing else to fear, and we can rejoice in the omnipresence of just such a God as he has declared himself to be.

But in this, the perverse sinner never rejoices. Rather is it a gloomy thought, that God's eye, more to be dreaded than ten thousand witnesses, searches all his secret sins, pierces all his serene respectability — this is so appalling, that his only relief is to forget it. But whither *can* he flee from God's Spirit? He may resist it, quench it, grieve it; but still it is around him. He may close his heart and his eyes, but he can not close the eyes of God's Spirit, while he deprives himself of his only possible consolations in life or in death. In a world, made, redeemed, and filled by God, yet without God in the world, and without hope in his end!

II. But the text bears chiefly on *our relations to God's presence in another world.*

Somewhere we must live hereafter. Of the future state we know nothing by experience, nor has any soul ever returned to tell us of it. But each shall soon know all about it for himself. And when our disembodied spirits step forth from their tabernacles, who can guess what we shall see? what we shall hear? how we shall communicate with the intelligences that inhabit eternity, or they with us? What new faculties—whose existence we never suspect while wrapped up in the body—will then come into play! Our souls are awfully profound. Elements of woe or bliss lie cradled in these rare and exquisite structures, all ready to rise in giant might. Sometimes, in this life, we tremble, as the depths are uncovered; and, sometimes, are thrilled with unspeakable rapture at glimpses of the heights to which no wing, save of a Christ-redeemed soul, can soar.

Now, what we are here, we shall be hereafter; the self-same beings. He who is holy shall be holy still, and he who is evil

shall be evil still. So God has told us, and so we feel it. Whatever we do not know of the future state, we know this of it, we shall carry our identity into it. And whatever we may see or may not see in that state, we know we shall see GOD, far more distinctly than ever here; that, when these material eyes are dissolved, these shutters of the soul's vision taken down, we shall know and feel the actual truth of the words: "Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Aye, then we shall be able to add, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there."

Hell, some will tell us, is here only *sheol*, the grave. That is indeed the word, but this is not the only place where it *must* mean far more than the receptacle of the body. It is here put in contrast with heaven, and the opposite of that is hell. Moreover, the Psalmist speaks of living, conscious being, and that is found, not in the grave, but in the world of departed spirits. Yes, God shows his glory to *all* the spiritual universe, as he did to Moses, by making all his goodness pass before them. The proclamation issues from the throne, and sounds through all the eternities: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in godness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." What is the character of God in this world, will be his unchangeably in the world to come; and these attributes will there shine forth, so that every eye shall see them. Every soul shall see that he is gracious and long-suffering, and that he will by no means clear the guilty. It shall be seen by all heaven, and it will make them happy; it shall be seen by all hell, and it will make them miserable. But in their hatred of it, where can they go from his presence?

Now I suppose that we often attach erroneous ideas to the existence of that place called hell. We say, perhaps, it is a place where God is not, where wicked souls are shut up so that they can not see God. I apprehend that conception is incomplete. A wicked soul would like nothing better than to be shut up, where he can not see God, nor God see him. It is his great object in this life to get away from God, or have God get away from him; such a place would be his paradise, not his prison. But it is not so. The rich man in hell *saw* Abraham and Lazarus in his bosom. Lost souls behold views of God's character the most distinct, visions of his glory the most bright—his mercy on believers, his justice on unbelievers. The sight of a holy company, "afar off," will be before them; and though to them Christ shall say, "Depart from me," it will be from him only as a Redeemer, never as their Judge and their Eternal Ruler. If they make their bed in hell, behold, he is there.

A clear sense, also, of their obligation to love and praise him

will rest upon them, and yet they *will* not love, and *will* not praise him. Nay, the very same glory that draws divinest music from the harps and voices of heaven, will draw from them weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Their everlasting destruction shall proceed "from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power;" that same presence and glorious power that shall "be admired in all them that believe."

Oh, it is terrible to think of it; to have no place where one can flee and wrap himself up in his own lonely misery; to hate to see God, and yet to have to see his glory in the vessels of wrath, his glory in the vessels of mercy; to try to hide from God's Spirit and escape from his presence, and yet to feel that God is awfully and dreadfully near him. To sink deeper and deeper into the bottomless pit, to find in the nethermost abyss, behold, *God is there!*

Now it is evident if you put such a man in the *place* called heaven, he would still be most wretched. He must there remember what good things he received in his lifetime. He must there remember that he did not choose what God chose for him, did not try, ever so faintly, to love God and be like God. And there would he be miserable in what he saw of God. With no sympathies with the holy ones, full of contradictions and antagonisms toward God, he would not and could not be happy. So Satan fell, even before the throne — so learned to hate Him whose name is Love. And so any sinful being would be there or any where, for it is not *where* he is but *what* he is, that makes him blest or wretched. How great must be the change *in him*, before he can be ready for that heaven of which it is the chief joy, *God is there!*

On the other hand, he who delights in God and loves his whole character however it may be displayed, can not be miserable any where. If he ascend up into heaven, God is there; if he make his bed in hell, behold, God is there. Yes, in hell. Lost souls are there monuments of his justice; they are those to whom he stretched out his hand of mercy all the day long, whose souls were precious in his sight; but who did not, and do not, choose that he should reign over them. We read that those in heaven say, "Amen, Allelnia," as the smoke ascends for ever and ever. Most solemnly true, because it is in God's word of truth. One thing is certain, this they do; and we can no more doubt this element in heaven's praise, than any other. And they say it, not because they delight in suffering, or find it easy to be reconciled to the woes of others, but because they recognize God even there, while the least malevolence or injustice in his dispensations would hush all their praise and cool all their love.

The bliss of heaven is not *ignorance*, as many fancy. God has not one side that may there be seen, and another that must not be

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not in the grave, ... if there God answereth his cry, "Cast
shows his glory ... presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from
by making all ... still praising him. Those manifestations of God
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"The Lor... than in the sight of them. There would be talk
and abo... face to face, as a man talketh with his friend; for God
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W... I take it, there is no higher evidence of a soul's harmony
... God's will, than to be able to say, I resign all my interests,
... eternity as well as time, into thy sovereign hands. Do with
me as seemeth good in thy sight. I am not worthy of the least
of all thy mercies.

You know, my friends, the pithy remark of Newton, that if God were to commission two of his angels, one to sweep the streets, and the other to be prime minister in the capital of an empire, each would proceed with equal alacrity to his allotted place. So with all saints. In whatever part of God's dominion he might send them, they would go. The cry, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory," would be answered too; for there is no place where it is not. What is misery to all unholy beings would be joy to them; and they would love just that which sinners hate. The beatific vision they would see and adore, and the sight of the redeemed would cheer them in their obedience. All that is needed is a heart to see, and adore, and obey.

Do I then mean to say it should be a matter of *indifference* whether we go to heaven or hell when we die? Not at all; there are many reasons why we should never choose the companionship of the enemies of God. But *if* we could glorify God and enjoy him—that chief end of man—more in one place than another, we ought, certainly, to submit our wills to his.

"Were I in *heaven* without my God,
'Twould be no heaven to me,"

and a soul in hell, as a locality abstractedly considered, could not be miserable with God. "Songs in the night" would sweetly rise, while wondering angels stooped to listen. We suppose the errand of a soul sent to sing one of the melodies of heaven in the world of woe, would carry such spiritual power and character, that the solitary praise would go up clear and distinct over all the surrounding rage and despair. And how glorious such a soul must be! How grand and deep the sanctification, by which a sinful human spirit is ransomed from sin's discords, and attuned to the harmonies of love! When God's love is perfected in it, all fear shall be cast out, the illimitable universe shall be filled with liberty, songs of praises shall keep pace with the ages, while every doubt shall vanish, like mists in the clear morning!

And now suffer me to apply this:

1. As a matter of great comfort to the people of God. Some of them have many fears respecting the future. They long for a token of their acceptance.

Let me say, the question of their preparation for heaven is that of their relation to God. If, in his dear Son, you are reconciled to him, if the thought of his everlasting presence is not a huge shadow in your soul, if you can praise him for all he is and all he does, if you love what he loves and hate what he hates, the great question is already settled.

Love works by contraries, so to speak; we know what we love by what we hate. The love of God, shed abroad in the soul, produces in the soul an aversion to sin; and this evidence of love grows the more, as we hate sin the more. We know more of the preciousness of Christ, as we know more of the dreadful evil from which he saves us; and the law makes the cross more appreciated. All the comforts of the Holy Spirit proceed on this. All the processes of sanctification tend to this. And if you, my friend, study God's word to learn what in you is different from what God expects it to be, if you abhor what God condemns, then you are growing in the love of God as well, and are more and more like him, as you grow in the likeness of your Saviour. If your mind is stayed on him, you will be kept in perfect peace.

True, you do not see God as you will in eternity. There comes an hour when that will break upon you. But this earth is before you, and the same God here. Can you see his glory *here;* and in His spirit who drank the bitter cup say, "Father, glorify thy name?" This happiness is now within your reach. Whatever is not, this is. Whatever you may not know, this you may know. Whatever you may lose, this you may not lose. It is quietness and assurance for ever. Nothing can really harm him who is God's friend. He whose will is God's, must evermore be happy. He who loves to see God now, in whatever forms he may be revealed, will love to see him in all the forms of eternity.

Take courage then, O child of God! Hope thou in him, for thou shalt yet praise him, who is the health of thy countenance and thy God. That same Spirit, that led you from worldliness and vanity, that, often grieved, has never left you, will be the last agent in your salvation, will be with you even in death. You can go forth into the untried scenes, with a holy confidence that wherever you go, you go where God is. Whatever you do not meet, you shall meet Him whom your soul loveth. Alone, as a mortal, but to go to Him who is all your salvation and all your desire, a mortal nevermore! Blessed hope! "Equal unto the angels!" To see, like them, the glory of God without dimness; to sing, like them, the praise of God without blunder! This subject, then, should give great comfort to all that love God.

2. Let me add, this subject should give great encouragement to sinners to repent and love God. Flee from him they can not. Hereafter, more than now, they must see him. And that they must see him is the very reason why he wishes them to love him. God does not wish to harm you, he does not wish to punish you. He wishes you to be happy for ever, but so long as God is what he is and you what you are, you must be miserable for ever.

Let, then, those of us who have no love to a holy God or holy duties, ponder the necessity of being born again. Let them know that a spotless morality may coëxist with a supreme love of self. Let them know that Christ came to reconcile them to God. Let them rejoice in the fact that God is ever near them, with his help. Let them know that his Spirit hovers over them. Without that Spirit, you can never be changed or saved.

"Oh! grieve him not away,
'Tis mercy's hour."

3. And as my last remark, let us all learn to love God more. Not because if we do we shall go to heaven, or if we do not we shall go to hell; not because paid or punished; but because we *ought* to love him. To love him is its own reward. To love him is to truly see him; while, without love, the mere sight of God will make us hate him, as it does evil spirits who do not love him. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God."

But oh, my friends, if you love God, no condition of yours is wretched. His presence lightens every load, his presence soothes every pang, his presence pours peace into the troubled soul, and his presence makes death radiant with smiles. As a furnace the faithful Saviour uses all these things, to purify and refine you, looking and watching for his own clear image to be reflected in you, and then you shall come out, like pure gold, to shine in his crown for ever. How glorious this explanation of all life's mysteries, this reconciliation of all life's contradictions! No tongue can tell, no

pencil paint, no song can celebrate the freedom and perfection of that hour, when, in this consummation of all discipline, you pass into his smiling presence, never more to sin through ages and ages eternal as the life of God. And the rapture of eternity is, *God is there!*

May these thoughts be with us now, prophecies of joy. In us may there be such a love of God, that we shall never ask where can we go from his spirit or flee from his presence, except to find, in the fact we can not flee, our greatest comfort and our surest evidence of hope.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

Satan Silenced.

THERE is a story how the devil appeared to a dying man and showed him a parchment roll, which was very long, whereon was written on every side the sins of the poor sick man, which were many in nnmber; and there were also written the idle words he had spoken in his life, together with the false words, the unchaste words, and angry words; afterward came his vain and ungodly words; and lastly, his actions, digested according to the commandments, whereupon Satan said:

"See here, behold thy virtues; see here, what thy examination must be."

Whereupon the poor sinner answered: "It is true, but thou hast not set down all, for thou shouldst have added and set down here below: 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all our sins;' and this also should not have been forgotten: 'Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.'" Whereupon the devil vanished. Thus if the devil should muster up our sins, and set them in order before us, let but Christ be named in a faithful way, and he will give back, and fly away with all speed.

"My sins are great, I do confess,
And of a scarlet dye;
But Jesus' blood can wash me clean,
As God does testify."

Exposition and Application.

IN conversation with an American clergyman, Dr. Chalmers said, a sermon, properly considered, consists of two parts, *exposition* and *application*. The truth lies in the text, like a sword in its scabbard. The business of the minister is, first, to draw the sword — that is *exposition;* and next to cut and thrust with it on the right and on the left—that is *application.*

The hearers, first of all, must see what is *the mind of God* in the text, and then that mind of God is to be used for their reformation. It is not enough that the preacher preach the truth; the hearers must know for themselves that it is *the very truth of God.* The power does not lie simply in the truth,

but in the truth *perceived to be of God.* When this point has been gained, then the power of preaching is the *power of God.* Hence, careful exposition, showing beyond all question what is the mind of God in the text, is the indispensable first thing in every sermon. Without this, the sword of the Spirit is, practically, not there. The sword sheathed is of no avail. Let it be first drawn by exposition, and then let it be wielded with a will.

Entering into Joy.

THE day of final account will be something more than a day of joy, for it will be a day of triumph to those who have faithfully labored. Amid much discouragement and many reproaches they have wrought; and sometimes they have been tempted to quit a service which seemed to bring to them so litttle gain, and the present promise of so small reward. Still they have wrought humbly on in the faith of Him whom they have sought dutifully to serve, and when the Lord appears their triumph will be complete. Archbishop Leighton employs the following beautiful language: "It is but little we can receive here, some drops of joy that enter into us; but there we shall enter into joy, as vessels put into a sea of happiness!" Happy are they who, having faithfully labored for the ascended Master, and having abundantly trusted in his worthy name, shall at last triumphantly enter into the joy of their Lord.

Triumph of Faith.

THERE is a striking and beautiful simplicity in a living and vital faith, such as is sometimes manifested in the closing scene of the dying Christian, which can impart a serene joy and peace to the soul when about to plume and spread its wings for the final flight.

A Christian woman was about to die. Death, on his pale horse, seemed to be coming in the distance and to be near at hand. Her pastor called to see and comfort her, and, as she lay gasping for breath, he asked if she felt prepared to die. Her answer was a very significant one.

"Mrs. M., you seem to be very sick."

"Yes, I am dying."

"And are you ready to die?"

"Sir, God knows—I have taken him at his word—and—I am not afraid to die."

After he had prayed with her, and was about to leave, she again took him by the hand, and managed to utter a few broken words. "I wanted to tell you—that I can trust in God—while I am dying. You have—often told me he would not—forsake me. And now I find it true—I am at peace—I die—willingly—and happy."

It was a triumphant scene to any believer, the perfect tranquillity in severe suffering, and in instant view of death. But the idea of faith presented in her words was doubly beautiful from its perfect simplicity. "God knows I have taken him at his word." Does not all unbelief consist in a reluctance to take God at his word? L.

Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."
—Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."
—Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON XVI.*

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THE DUTIES OF AMERICAN CHRISTIANS TO THEIR COUNTRY.

"And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace."—Jeremiah 29: 7.

Jeremiah was a true patriot, a man thoroughly devoted to the welfare of his country. He loved his own nation, and for its welfare he watched, prayed, and labored with all the ardor of enthusiasm; and its miseries he deplored with the most pathetic eloquence. In his prophetical description of the calamities which impended over his country, the most expressive images and the most forcible and pathetic terms are employed; and after he had lived to see his own predictions respecting the desolations of Jerusalem and the captivity of Judah accomplished, his grief finds vent in patriotic tears; he poured forth the effusions of his patri-

* Preached before the American Baptist Home Mission Society, at its Anniversary in Philadelphia, May, 1864.

otic heart, and piously wept over the ruins of his beloved country. In the character of a mourner, he celebrates her obsequies in the most plaintive strains, and copiously and tenderly does he bewail her misfortunes. His description of the once flourishing city, lately chief among the nations, sitting in the character of a female, solitary, afflicted, in a state of widowhood, deserted by her friends, betrayed by her nearest connections, imploring relief, and seeking consolation in vain, is very elegant and poetical; and his personification of the ways of Zion mourning, because none are come to her solemn feasts, is most beautiful. And how tender and pathetic is his complaint, as he personifies his land, and speaks in her name, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by, behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger!"

As a prophet, during his whole career, Jeremiah exercised his office with great zeal and faithfulness, and notwithstanding his countrymen bitterly opposed him in the conscientious discharge of his duties, and inflicted upon him the most injurious treatment, yet he was still affectionately attached to them. Such was his love to his country and his countrymen, notwithstanding their injurious treatment of him, that he refused the favor of the King of Babylon, who tendered him a home in his palace; and he chose rather to suffer affliction with his own people in his own land, than to be a companion of princes, and to sit at the table of kings! He preferred to abide with the afflicted remnant in the land of Judah, and to share their friendship, rather than separately to enjoy ease and affluence at the court of Babylon.

He did not, however, lose sight of those of his countrymen who were captives in Babylon, but embraced every opportunity that occurred of promoting their welfare. At the time when the words of my text were written, Jeconiah, King of Judah, and the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem, and many of the elders, priests, and prophets, together with many of the common people, had been already carried away captive to Babylon; and as Zedekiah, who now reigned in Jerusalem, was sending ambassadors to the King of Babylon, by these persons an opportunity was afforded Jeremiah of writing to the captives in Babylon and other cities of Chaldea, for their instruction; and in the name of the Lord, therefore, he addressed to them a letter, of which the words of my text form a part. The captives had among them false prophets, who flattered them with the hope of a speedy restoration to their native land, and, deluded by these false predictions, they had grown indifferent to the objects and interests about them. In this letter Jeremiah seeks to counteract the influence of the false prophets, and he exhorts the captives for the present to settle down quietly in Babylon, and not to listen to those who would deceive them; but, at the same time, they are encouraged by the assur-

ance, that, at the expiration of the predicted seventy years, when they should have been cured of their idolatrous propensities, God would restore them. Jeremiah also seeks to comfort these captives by assuring them that they had no reason either to despair of success, or to envy their brethren who still remained in their own land. And as they were not to expect a speedy return to their own country, he exhorts them not to remain in an unsettled condition, but to be patient, contented, industrious, and useful, and to seek to make themselves as comfortable as was consistent with their situation. It is always wise for men to make the best they can of their condition in life, let that condition be what it may; and these captive Jews are exhorted to bring their mind to their condition, and not to refuse the comforts of the land of Babylon, because they were deprived of the comforts of the land of Judah. Instead of growing indifferent to the objects and interests about them, the prophet urges them to seek, rather, the prosperity and happiness of Babylon, or any other city in Chaldea, where they were placed. Chaldea was their home for the time being, and they must be home missionaries, and seek to promote the good of those around them by prayer and all suitable effort. As long as they remained the subjects of the king of Babylon—though he was a heathen, an idolator, an oppressor, and an enemy to God and to his people, yet while he gave them protection, they must pay him allegiance, and live quiet and peaceable lives under him, not plotting to shake off his yoke, but patiently leaving it to God in due time to work deliverance for them. And as long as they resided in the cities of Chaldea they were to be engaged in healthful and well-directed efforts for the good of that land. By prayer and supplication, and other suitable means, they were to seek the security and prosperity of that country. It was their duty to seek the peace and welfare of the land where they dwelt. The word "peace," as used in Scripture, generally denotes quiet and tranquillity, but it is often used for every kind and degree of prosperity and happiness, as to "*go in peace;*" to "*die in peace;*" "*God give you peace;*" "peace be to this house;" and "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." To "seek the peace" of a city or country, is to pursue its welfare, to desire its prosperity, to seek to secure for it good of every kind. The term "*peace*" is thus used in our text to denote good at large—every kind and degree of prosperity and happiness.

And if it was the duty of these captive Jews to seek the good of those cities in Chaldea, in which they were to sojourn but for a time, our native land, or the country in which we enjoy all the rights of citizenship, under a good government, must have still stronger claims upon us. And this duty of seeking the good of the land in which we dwell, and the prosperity of the government that affords us protection, is enforced in our text by an argument

taken from self-interest—"In the peace thereof shall ye have peace." When our country is blessed with security and prosperity; when it is in a flourishing state as to its health and trade—we shall have a share in these general advantages; and on the other hand, when our land is distressed with the sword, famine, or pestilence, or any grievous calamity, we shall be involved in the same. A free people, under a good government, should be, above all others, characterized by patriotic feeling, and they should diligently seek to promote the good of their country. In proportion as righteousness generally prevails in our land, and in proportion as our rulers are distinguished for their ability, knowledge, and integrity, we may expect to enjoy great quietness, and to abide in a home of peace, in sure dwellings and in quiet resting-places; and these blessings are necessary to enable us to prosecute successfully the cultivation of godliness. And if a good government, and a quiet, peaceable community, are blessings intimately connected with individual happiness, all are concerned in seeking to secure, and in endeavoring to perpetuate, the possession of these desirable blessings.

Let us now proceed to inquire:

I. What are those things which are absolutely necessary to the security and prosperity, the true glory and the true happiness of our country? II. What are the best means of securing those things which are essential to our country's highest welfare? III. We shall present some arguments to enforce the duties of personal and combined activity in seeking the highest good of our land.

I. Let us inquire, What are those things which are absolutely necessary to the security and prosperity, the true glory and the true happiness of our country?

The wisest of men gave us a sound political maxim when he uttered the proverb: "Righteousness exalteth a nation." The true honor of a nation, like that of an individual, lies in *character*, and the general prevalence of righteousness in the community, both among rulers and people, is necessary to the security and prosperity, the true glory and the true happiness of a nation. "When there is, in any community, the prevalence of true religion, with its inseparable attendants and proportionals, the personal and social virtues, sobriety, justice, mutual integrity and honor, industry and practical benevolence, there are in that community the elements of national greatness, of true, internal, independent happiness, as well as of advancing prosperity and elevation. The tendency of these to promote such results is manifest. They produce peace, union, stability, and concentration of energies, with personal and social, civil and religious liberty. They are, moreover, the means of bringing down the divine blessing on

a country, without which, what is there that can prosper?—without which, all will be failure, all blight and barrenness, all disappointment and discomfiture, all declension and penury, and slow or rapid consumption. The prevalence of impiety, with its accompanying vices, tends, in the very nature of things, to ruin—to ruin both personal and national; and the tendency is aggravated by its withdrawing the protection and smile of the Almighty, the 'righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness.'"

It is an admired saying of a popular orator, that "no government can long withstand the just claims of a people who have had the courage to conquer their own vices." Is not the converse of the proposition equally true—that no people can maintain a just government, who are slaves to their own vices? A free government is a government of moral influence. It derives its supremacy, not so much from the pains and penalties of the statute-book, as from the virtue and intelligence of the people. A people, in order to be free, must have the courage to conquer their own vices. Burke has well remarked: "Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put chains upon their own appetites; in proportion as their love of justice is above their rapacity; in proportion as their soundness and sobriety of understanding is above their vanity and presumption; in proportion as they are more disposed to listen to the counsels of the wise and good, in preference to the flattery of knaves. Society can not exist unless a controlling power upon the will and appetites is placed somewhere; and the less of it there is within, the more of it there must be without. It is ordained, in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds can not be free. Passions forge their fetters." A free government and its institutions can flourish only where intelligence and the civic and moral virtues flourish in the community. "The great comprehensive truths," says President Quincy, "written in letters of living light on every page of our history, are these: human happiness has no perfect security but freedom; freedom, none but virtue; virtue, none but knowledge; and neither freedom nor virtue has any vigor or immortal hope, except in the principles of the Christian faith, and in the sanctions of the Christian religion." Religion is the only sure basis of civil society. A genuine Christian principle must pervade and animate the minds of ruler and people, in order to the promotion of pure virtue and sound morals in the nation, and without these, the safety of the state can not be secured. "Animated by Christian principle, the *public functionary* will be devoted to his country's honor and interests; the *legislator* will feel it to be his solemn duty to enact just laws; the *executive* will see to it that the laws of the land are carried faithfully into execution; the *juror* will act under a deep sense of his solemn responsibility, and the dearest interests of his country

and his fellow-citizens will be safe in his hands. Let our editors and our literary men be actuated by virtuous, patriotic, and truly religious principles, and, in the hands of such men, a *free press* would prove a blessing of inestimable value. Such men would employ the power of the press to exert a salutary influence over the public manners; to pour increasing light on the public mind; to keep steadily before the view of the people their national rights; to fan the sacred flame of patriotism; and to scourge vice and immorality, and make them shrink from the view of the community. In the hands of truly patriotic men, a free press would hold up to the public gaze the conduct of men in office, and keep them under the restraining awe of public sentiment, and in a rigid adherence to the line of their duties; it would sound the alarm at the first encroachment of ambition and power; and it would concentrate a nation's energies in sustaining patriotic men and a virtuous government, and in putting down oppression and tyranny. In this way the influence of the press would be employed in promoting the patriotism of rulers, and the virtues of the people, and in cherishing and sustaining the free institutions of the land. Let the great body of our population be actuated by virtuous and religious principles, and their elective power will be wisely used. They will not bestow places of power and trust on vicious and unprincipled men. The reins of government, and the guardianship of our free institutions will be committed to virtuous and enlightened men, and thus their well-being and perpetuity will be secured."

The security and prosperity, the true glory and the true happiness of our country, are inseparably connected with the advancement of the interests of religion among its inhabitants. Of the contrary, alas! there is a vast and growing amount in our land; and it is aggravated by the greatness and abundance of our privileges—of the light of divine knowledge and the varied *means* of piety and virtue. There are systems in operation, of which the tendency is to the deterioration of all that is good, and the introduction of all that is evil. The Psalmist asks: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Here the pillars or foundations of social order and civil society are represented as destroyed, when truth, righteousness, justice, and virtue no longer prevail, and the intercourse of men, as members of society, is governed by mere selfishness, to the exclusion of the fear of God and correct moral principle. The late Dr. J. A. Alexander, in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, translates the passage as follows: "For the foundations will be cast down, and *what hath the righteous done?*"—that is, "what has he done to prevent such a destruction of the foundations of social order and justice?" "The question," he says, "implies that the righteous has effected nothing *in opposition* to the prevalent iniquity."

If this be the correct rendering of the passage, it only gives the more point and pertinency to it in its application to the times. For, without a question, if all professedly good men in our land, or all who claim to be governed by a regard to the supremacy of God and equal justice to men, had only conscientiously and persistently *done their duty*, irrespective of selfish ends, we should not now have to mourn over the sad spectacle of our beloved nation trembling on the verge of dissolution and ruin. "Our party, right or wrong," has too often been the motto even of Christian men, and it is a motto which has had a most potent influence in loosening the foundations of government and of society. It is an embodiment of real atheism. It leaves moral responsibility to God wholly out of the account. And, if it is *still to be* the motto of Christians—to say nothing of others—sooner or later the work of destroying the foundations will be complete, in spite of all our armies. We shall, too late, learn the meaning of those words of warning: "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of Hosts. For of old time, I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands, and thou saidst, I will not transgress. I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how, then, art thou turned into a degenerate plant of a strange vine? Thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord."

II. We proceed to inquire, What are the best means of securing those things which are essential to our country's highest welfare? We have seen that the prevalence of true religion, and its inseparable attendants, intelligence and virtue, are essential to the security and prosperity, the true glory and the true happiness of our country. The question, then, before us, in other words, is simply this: How can we best secure the advancement of the interests of religion, intelligence, and virtue, among the inhabitants of this land?

1. One important means of securing the highest good of our country is *the general diffusion of education.*

"Education," says Edward Everett, "is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army. If we retrench the wages of the schoolmaster, we must raise those of the recruiting-sergeant." The welfare and prosperity of a free nation require a large amount of virtue and intelligence in the mass of the people, and our youth should be properly instructed in the principles of science and literature, and they should receive sound instruction in moral and religious duties. It is easy to see that the cause of popular education is closely connected with the healthy existence of civil society, especially in the form which such society has a

sumed with us. Having been at liberty to choose a government for ourselves, we have resorted to the republican mode, the first principle of which is, that the people are the source of all political power. We have all assented to this form of government, each individual for himself, and each, therefore, is under contract with all for its preservation. The obligations which the adoption of any form of government imposes on the citizens, do not rest alone in the constitution and laws. Some of the most essential are implied in the very nature of the government adopted. Such are those which have regard to personal character and conduct, and their influence for good or evil on the stability and permanence of the political forms in use.

It is universallyconceded that popular intelligence and popular virtue are indispensable to the existence and continuance of such a government as ours; and if so, then, as the character of the public will be what the mass of individual character is, it is the duty of every individual to be virtuous, and to possess a competent degree of intelligence. Every man who has any voice or influence in public affairs, is bound to inform himself and act honestly; for if any one is not, no one is—all are at liberty to be both ignorant and dishonest—and whenever that happens, the government, being in the hands of the people, and swayed by a majority of voices, must become the most odious and oppressive of all tyrannies, and hasten to a violent conclusion. The whole power of the community rests with the majority, and no matter how well defined and strictly guarded the limits of that power may be, by the written terms of the compact, there are constant and strong temptations to exceed those limits, and the grand security rests, and must rest after all, with the intelligence of the majority to discover the proper boundaries of their power, and their sense of moral obligation to keep within them. In other words, the question of the existence and continuance of a popular government is always a question of the existence and continuance of popular intelligence and virtue, and hence the necessity and the obligation of every member of such a community to be educated and to be virtuous.

In a country in which the people are invested with all the political power, and are called upon, at certain periods, to elect the functionaries of government, the importance of having every man qualified to exercise the right of suffrage is most obvious. History teaches us that in popular governments there is a tendency to unsteadiness and fluctuation. The hero of to-day is often the exile of to-morrow. Under the guidance of passion and unprincipled demagogues, deeds of violence are committed, for which no subsequent regrets can make atonement. But teach the people knowledge, and you teach them to detect the sophistries of the artful demagogue. Train and cultivate their intellect, and

you train them to think before they act, to moderate the violence of their passions, and to resist sudden and misguided impulses of feeling. Instruct them in their various and combined interests, and you prepare them to avoid the evils of excessive legislation; and to show their wisdom in other ways than by perpetual changes in their statute-book. You prepare them to rejoice in the success of every branch of honest industry, and to look with other feelings than those of envy on the growing wealth of neighboring nations. Give them enlarged and liberal views of national policy, and inspire them with the true principles of national freedom, and their love of liberty will not degenerate into licentiousness, nor contract into an exclusive and selfish patriotism.

As it is necessary for the people to be *virtuous* as well as intelligent, the education which is necessary for the safety and prosperity of the state comprehends all the instruction, restraints, and moral discipline which are requisite for the government of the passions, the moulding of the affections, the formation of an enlightened conscience, and the renovation of the heart. Moral instruction is quite as important to the object had in view in popular education as intellectual instruction; it is indispensable to that object. But to make such instruction effective, it should be given according to the best code of morals known to the country and the age, and that code it is universally conceded is contained in the Bible. Hence a deist, on one occasion, after publicly laboring to disprove Christianity, and to bring Scripture into contempt as a forgery, was found the next morning instructing his child from the pages of the New Testament. When charged with the flagrant inconsistency, his only reply was that it was necessary to teach the child morality, and that nowhere else was there to be found such pure morality as in the Bible. And that deist was right. It is necessary that children should be taught morality, and for this the Bible is the very best text-book. If we keep in view the object of popular education—the necessity of fitting the people, by moral as well as intellectual discipline, for self-government—no one can doubt that any system of instruction which overlooks the training and informing of the moral faculties, must be wretchedly and fatally defective. Crime and merely intellectual culture, so far from being disassociated in history and statistics, are, unhappily, old acquaintances and tried friends. Knowledge is power, but unsanctified knowledge is *power for evil*. To neglect the moral powers in education is to educate not quite half the man. To cultivate the intellect *only* is to unhinge the mind and destroy the essential balance of the mental powers; it is to light up a recess only the better to show how dark it is. And if this is all that is done in popular education, then nothing, literally nothing, is done toward creating and establishing public

virtue, and forming a moral people. And hence the great importance of our Sabbath-schools, as they supply, in part, the defects of our day-schools. In the Sabbath-school the Bible is the principal text-book, and the principles of its pure morality are brought to bear on the minds of the young. Thus their moral powers are cultivated according to the best standard; and being thus instructed in moral and religious truth, they are taught to feel habitually the force of moral obligation.

2. Another important means of securing the highest good of our nation is *the general distribution of the Bible.* Benjamin Franklin says: "A newspaper and Bible in every house, and a good school-house in every district, all studied and appreciated as they merit, are the principal supporters of virtue, morality, and civil liberty." Dr. Edgar, formerly of Nashville, relates that on one of his visits to General Jackson he found him reading the Bible, and holding up that blessed book in his right hand, the general remarked: "Doctor, this book is the bulwark of our republican institutions—the anchor of our present and future safety." The Bible is the great instrument for enlightening the intellect and purifying the heart. When the mind is brought into contact with its stupendous truths, it is elevated and endowed with new vigor; and when the intellect attempts to grasp and measure the great truths of the Bible by this very process, the mental powers are enlarged and strengthened. And the general diffusion of the Bible is one of the very best means to civilize and humanize mankind; to purify and exalt the general system of public morals; to give efficacy to the just precepts of international and municipal law; to enforce the observance of prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude; and to improve all the relations of social and domestic life. It is well known that there exists a system of moral duties which are considered to be of imperfect obligation because they are not within the cognizance of human laws. Such, among others, are the duties of charity, benevolence, gratitude, the domestic affections, and the love of our neighbor. These are necessarily left by human law-givers, in a great degree, to the government of conscience. But the Bible takes notice of all such duties. It most pointedly condemns every species of cruelty, unkindness, uncharitableness, and selfishness, and hardness of heart; and it comes in aid of the civil law by the universality and the precision of its commands, and by the energy and severity of its denunciations. Human laws labor under many other great imperfections. They extend to external actions only. They can not reach that catalogue of secret crimes which are committed without any witness, save the all-seeing eye of that Being whose presence is every where, and whose laws reach the hidden recesses of vice, and carry their sanctions to the thoughts and intents of the heart. In this view, the teachings of the Bible supply all the deficiencies of

human laws, and lend an essential aid to the administration of justice.

As far as the influence of the Bible is felt in our nation, the tendency is to strengthen and establish the foundations of our national freedom and happiness. The Bible in every house, read and appreciated according to its true merit, would be the salt of the nation and the light of the land. Take away its restraining influence from the nation, and the degradation of the great mass of the people would at once commence, and it would go on and increase until liberty was extinct, and the reign of anarchy or despotism would commence. The principles of the Bible must lie at the foundation of every edifice of human happiness, and when this corner-stone is removed the building must fall. Let the influence of the Bible be thoroughly felt through the length and breadth of our land, and our country will be safe; let its influence cease from the minds of our citizens and our republic, with its free institutions, will totter and fall. God has said: "The nation and kingdom that will not serve me shall perish;" and proud and fearless of Heaven as we may be, in one hour our destruction may come. The recent facts in our history go to show that God never lacks for instruments to punish a land for its crimes. In our country's bosom lie the materials of ruin, which wait only the divine permission to burst forth in terrific eruption, scattering far and wide the fragments of our national greatness.

To save our land, we need the personal and the combined activity of the friends of the truth and of true religion, to diffuse right principles, and thus to counter-work the spread and influence of wrong ones. And no better *moral* means can be employed to check the progress of error and the reign of vice than the free and general distribution of the Bible. Let us give to the destitute with an unsparing hand that Book which is the aliment of the moral principle. We can not, if we would, sink our countrymen into slaves, and our aim should be to elevate them to the rank of virtuous freemen. Let the circulation of the Bible be commensurate with our population; let it be placed in every dwelling; let it be sent to every cabin in the remotest wilderness. The Bible can do more for the security of our country than our ablest generals. It can preserve her domestic tranquillity, and transmit her whole circle of blessings to the latest posterity better than could hosts of standing armies. The true friend of his country will plant the rose of Sharon in the midst of her moral deserts.

3. Another important means of securing the highest good of our country is *the preaching of the gospel.* The gospel of the grace of God, in its heaven-born simplicity, is the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. This is the only remedy for the moral and spiritual evils under which our nature groans. What does a sinning, suffering world need? For what does

humanity groan? Not the dreams of the recluse—not the speculations of the philosopher. Greece had her fill of wordly wisdom, and in her "wisdom knew not God." In our own day, Germany has become the seat of philosophy; and Germany, like Greece, is rushing into atheism. The gospel is the only thing in the universe which is able to make wise unto salvation. This is a guilty world; and it needs pardon of sin and restoration to the divine favor. It is a suffering world; and it needs consolation. It is a polluted world; and it needs sanctification. It is a dying world; and it needs assured immortal hopes. Would you mock its hungerings by giving it "a stone?" Would you deride its woes by offering the vain speculations of a fellow-man in the place of the sure Word of God, on which the soul may rest for ever? God's plan is different: "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." "Christ crucified," and the gospel which unfolds his divine mission, constitute the only adequate remedy for the sins and the woes of a rebel race. Nothing but the gospel can elevate and save. The will of man is too perverse to yield to mere human teachings. The affections are too depraved to be changed by the abstractions of the schools. These fall on the unrenewed heart like the moonbeams on the iceberg. The human understanding is too darkened to comprehend the wire-drawn distinctions and endless involutions of metaphysical science. Even in this land of comparative light, not one in a thousand of the people cares a groat for the questions about which metaphysicians strive; and fewer still would be made better or worse if they could understand the points in controversy. But they *can* grasp the leading doctrines of the cross. Even the child can comprehend all of truth that is essential to salvation—all that leads to heaven and enters there. It is just these truths that the people—all the people—need. It is to these that the promises of God apply. It is these, and these alone, that the Holy Spirit blesses. It is converting, sanctifying truth, and not speculations about truth, that a free nation needs for all its masses, or it will run riot with errors in every form, and will become the haunt of vice of every grade. *Isms* have no saving power; the gospel has. Our nature is a wreck, a chaos, which the Cross of Calvary alone can adjust. There is an aching void in our hearts which the gospel only can fill. There are pantings and longings in our nature which the cross alone can satisfy. As the story of the cross is proclaimed, and God's plan of saving sinners is unfolded, this truth, attended by the Spirit's power, becomes a renovator of the heart. The guilty conscience is cleansed, the proud heart humbled, and the reluctant will subdued. All the powers of the man are won over to the obedience of the faith. Men become new creatures in their relation to God and to each other.

Each new power is drawn forth into the service of God, all the graces of the Spirit shine forth in their beauty and loveliness, ungodliness and worldly lusts are denied, and the subject of the heavenly change "lives soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world." Where the gospel triumphs, men are not only prepared for the heavenly world, but for the earthly world. Industry, frugality, and honesty now exercised are promotive of personal and social enjoyment. All the conveniences and comforts of life are multiplied. A gradual elevation, intellectually, morally, and socially, is seen in the community. The gospel breathes peace on earth and good-will to men. Its object is to chase away darkness from the human soul, and thence from the community, by the diffusion of heavenly knowledge. It breathes the spirit of liberty in all things, civil and religious; it calls on men to consider this as their inalienable birthright as the freedmen of the Lord. It awakens man to a deep sense of his dignity and worth as an immortal being, and fastens upon him a deep impression of his individual responsibility to God. This gospel breathes death to tyranny and oppression, and constrains men to fear God, to honor the magistracy, and to love all men. It brings health and salvation to man's soul, for it is the very instrument by which the Holy Spirit begets the new life and all the elementary principles of the purest virtues. These Christian graces in the soul lead to virtuous actions in the life—to the exhibition of a morality that throws a lustre over the human character, and renders man a blessing to his family, to society, and to his country.

Now, such being its influence on individual character, it is obvious that wherever its pure and subduing spirit exerts its power over a land, it must chase away darkness from its population, it must banish vice and folly, it must lessen crimes, it must beget an enlightened reverence for the laws, it must make good citizens, it must thence lend a vigor to the arm of justice and strength to the hands which administer its laws; it must pour the most salutary influence on every portion of our population. The preached gospel has an elevating effect on the general morality of a neighborhood, even in addition to the souls spiritualized and christianized by its instrumentality. For every man that is savingly converted, there is a sort of guarantee that perhaps fifty others will be elevated somewhat in the morality of their habits. Christians are "the salt of the earth," and as there is a small proportion, in point of bulk, between the salt and the thing salted, so spiritual men may bear a small proportion to the society in which they are placed, and yet the whole of that society may be indebted to them for its very continuance—just as the thing salted is prevented from falling into dissolution by the small quantity of salt. Christians, in the same way, are the salt of the society in which they are placed, by exerting a purifying and preserving influence. Our

secular politicians and philosophers little think how much they are indebted to Christian influence and example for the highest civil blessings they enjoy. Religion is the conservative influence of society; and by the influence of the gospel, wherever it prevails, the population at large are made more manageable, more civilized, and more orderly; and let this world be deprived of an evangelical and practical Christianity, and the whole of society would soon hasten to dissolution.

Now, as the preaching of the gospel is God's appointed plan for the instruction and reformation of mankind; as the public proclamation of Christ crucified is the great appointed means of salvation, to which all other means, however important, are either preparatory or subordinate; and as this means is so effectual in promoting the security and prosperity—the true glory and the true happiness of our country—should not this means be prosecuted with the utmost vigor? Should we not exert ourselves to the full extent of our ability, in seeking, by town and city missions, and country missions, to circulate light and dissipate darkness—to bring every part of our land under the leavening influence of the great truths of the gospel? The living teacher should be sent to every destitute field, that God may be glorified, the souls of men saved, and the best interests of our country promoted.

4. I will notice one more means of securing the highest good of our country, and that is the means particularly mentioned in our text—*Prayer*. "Seek the peace of the city, and pray unto the Lord for it." The *moral* means on which I have dwelt, however faithfully employed, will be successful only as God crowns them with his blessing; and his interposition is granted in answer to prayer. In employing these means the Christian seeks supremely the salvation of souls, but without the converting power of the Holy Spirit not a single soul will ever be saved; and it is in answer to prayer that his saving power is given. And then, too, the Bible teaches us that prayer is useful in procuring blessings for communities as well as for individuals and families. And in our text, the captives in Babylon are not merely directed in a general way to seek the welfare of that land, but they are specially directed to *pray* for its peace or prosperity. And in answer to the prayers of the pious captives, the surprising change may have taken place in the character of Nebuchadnezzar; and Daniel and his companions may have been raised to distinction in that land to befriend the captives; and the favorable decrees passed for the benefit of the Jewish people by Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, and others, may all have been secured by persevering prayer. The hearts of all kings are in the hand of the Lord, and he can turn them as the rivulets of water, whithersoever he will. Paul exhorts Christians to make "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men—for kings, and for all that

are in authority—that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." God said to Solomon (2 Chron. 7: 13, 14): "If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people—if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." And by their prayers, Christians now, in this crisis of our national history, may do much to avert evil and to secure good for our country; and this means of seeking the welfare of our land should be tried to the utmost. We believe the power of prayer for our country has never yet been fully tested. Without doubt, many sincere and humble prayers have arisen, and are now ascending to Heaven, in behalf of our guilty land; but it is greatly to be feared that many Christian people fail to offer that earnest prayer of faith for our common country, for our rulers, and for all our people, that God requires.

When Abraham learned that God was about to destroy Sodom, he at once interceded with God on the behalf of that guilty city. Feeling that he had an interest at the throne of grace, he made use of it on behalf of his ungodly neighbors. He entreated that the city might be spared, or at least the righteous men in it; and as an answer to his prayer, God assured him that if ten righteous men could be found in the Cities of the Plain he would spare those cities, and not consign them to the punishment which their sins had so eminently deserved.

In the history of Moses we learn that on one occasion the children of Israel treated him, and even Jehovah himself, with the most insolent contempt, by making a golden calf, and falling down and worshipping it; and God "said that he would destroy them, had not Moses, his chosen, stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them" (Ps. 106: 23). On that remarkable occasion God said to Moses: "Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation" (Ex. 32: 10). Under these circumstances, what did Moses do? Did he stand aside, and let God do as he said? No; his mind runs back to the Egyptians, and he thinks how they will triumph. "Wherefore," he asks, "should the Egyptians speak, and say: For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth?" By prayer, therefore, he took hold of the uplifted arm of Jehovah, and averted the blow. God seemed unable to deny any thing to such importunity, and thus Moses stood in the gap and prevailed with God. So again, when the people complained against God, and against Moses, and the fire of God consumed them in their [redacted];

"*when Moses prayed unto the Lord the fire* was quenched" (Num. 11: 1, 2). So, also, when the spies brought back an evil report from the land of Canaan, and the people, in despondency, determined to throw off their allegiance to God and to Moses, and to return back to Egypt, the Lord again threatened to destroy them, as if weary of forbearing, and again the prayers of Moses saved them from immediate destruction.

And other examples of the power of prayer are recorded in the Bible. When the Philistines fought against Israel, and Samuel cried unto the Lord on their behalf, "the Lord thundered with a great thunder that day upon the Philistines, and discomfitted them, and they were smitten before Israel." It was thus, in the language of the Psalmist, God honored "Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the Lord, and he answered them" (Ps. 99: 6). Jehoshaphat on one occasion heard of a great multitude coming against him in battle. It was a critical moment in the history of the kingdom of Judah. Jehoshaphat was greatly alarmed, but immediately "set himself to seek the aid of the Lord, and had a fast proclaimed" throughout the whole of his kingdom. The people themselves were so deeply impressed with the importance of the proclamation, that with one heart they came up from all parts of the land to the temple to ask the help of the Lord in their distress. They even brought "their wives and their little ones" with them to the place appointed. The king himself led in their devotions, making most fervent prayer for success against their enemies. Nor did they pray in vain. Their enemies were completely routed, and left on the field "multitudes of dead, and great abundance of riches and jewels" (2 Chron. 20).

And similar illustrations of the power of prayer we have on record in more modern times. John Knox, the great Scottish reformer, was a man famous for his power in prayer. Such was his love to his country that the burden of his prayer to God was: "Give me Scotland, or else I die." Queen Mary said of him that she feared his prayers more than an army of ten thousand men. And events showed that she had reason to do it. He used to be in such an agony for the deliverance of his country that he could not sleep. He had a place in his garden where he used to go to pray. One night he and several friends were praying together, and as they prayed, Knox spoke, and said that deliverance had come. He could not tell what had happened, but he felt that in some way their prayers had been answered. And the next news informed them that their enemy, Mary, Queen of Scotland, was dead.

At one time in the history of the Lutheran reformation, soon after the conference at Ausburgh in 1530, when the cause of the reformers wore a very threatening aspect, Melancthon, with Lu-

ther and other divines, met together to consult about the measures to be adopted in that trying exigency; and, after spending some time in prayer to God, from whom alone they could expect adequate assistance, Melancthon was suddenly called out of the room, from which he retired under great depression of spirits. He saw, during his absence, some of the elders of the reformed churches, with their parishioners and families. Several children were also brought, hanging at the breast; while others, a little older, were engaged in prayer. This reminded him of the language of the Psalmist: "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger" (Ps. 8:2). Animated by this interesting scene, he returned to his friends with a disencumbered mind and a cheerful countenance. Luther, astonished at this sudden change, asked: "What now? what has happened to you, Philip, that you are become so cheerful?" "Oh, sirs," replied Melancthon, "let us not be discouraged, for I have seen our noble protectors, and such as I will venture to say will prove invincible against every foe." "And pray," returned Luther, thrilling with surprise and pleasure, "who and where are these powerful heroes?" "*Oh*," said Melancthon, "*they are the wives of our parishioners and their little children*, whose prayers I have just witnessed—prayers which I am satisfied our God will hear; for, as our heavenly Father and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has never despised nor rejected our supplications, we have reason to trust that he will not in the present alarming crisis." The event proved that Melancthon was not mistaken. God heard their prayers. (Cox's *Life of Melancthon.*) In the annals of English history we have an equally striking instance of the interposition of Heaven in answer to prayer. At the period alluded to, the reformation in England had struggled through the tortures of the rack and the fires of Smithfield, and been established in fear and hesitation at the accession of Elizabeth, and almost every thing seemed to predict its speedy extinction. Its politic friends trembled at their own work, and calculated whether it might not fall and crush them. Within, there were division, faction, treachery—without, there was a mustering of the might of Europe to crush the movement in its birth. At a time when England was little conversant with war, and miserably defective in military science, a fleet such as the world had never seen, and a veteran army inured to conquest and led by skilful captains, were sent to her shores to drive her people with sword and fire into the idolatries which they had abjured. The "Invincible Armada" of Spain had been fitted up at a prodigious expense, and sent forth to reduce England to the Catholic faith. The Prince of Parma stood ready also to transport a veteran force of thirty thousand men to the coast of England to assist Spain in carrying out her designs. Immense preparations

were made for the conquest, and the Protestants of Europe naturally regard with intense interest the approach of a contest which was probably to decide the fate of their religion, and the pious would feel that their help was in God alone. As if to show how little the might and wisdom of England's rulers could avail to her deliverance, or be the instruments of safety, her raw militia were placed under the command of a knight whose notorious incapacity gave too sure a promise of disgrace and discomfiture. Romanism exulted throughout her many kingdoms, and raised the jubilant shout of anticipated triumph when the Spanish Armada spread its sails to the winds, while the heart of Protestantism died within her. It was indeed Jerusalem girdled once more by the overwhelming army of Sennacherib. But the destroying angel was sent down to her defense, and the raging tempest was as fatal as the midnight blast that breathed upon the sleeping Assyrians. Those ships that reached the shores of Britain were only drifted thither as helpless wrecks, and the ocean was encumbered with ruins and carcasses; while the winds and waves of that sea-girt island lifted up their voices in a language which the whole world could hear and understand, as they thundered in the ears of nations, "This is the finger of God!"

And had prayer nothing to do with this remarkable deliverance? Fuller, the British church historian, relates, as that which he had received from witnesses beyond exception, the following anecdote of John Fox, the author of the *Book of Martyrs:* "In the year 1588, when *the Spanish half-moon* did hope to rule all the motion in our seas, Master John Fox was privately in his chamber battering heaven with his importunity in behalf of this sinful nation. And we may justly presume that his devotion was as actually instrumental to the victory as the wisdom of our admiral, the valor of his soldiers, and the skill and industry of his seamen. On a sudden, coming down to his parish, he cried out: '*They are gone! they are gone!*' Which, indeed, happened at the same instant, as by exact computation did afterward appear." (Abel Redivius, pp. 381, 382. Neal's History, vol. 1, p. 186.) The prayers of Isaiah, Hezekiah, and others, secured the destruction of the Assyrian army; and, in like manner, the prayers of John Fox and others secured the destruction of the Spanish fleet. The King of Spain and other enemies of England claimed that the ruin of the Spanish fleet brought no glory to Britain, as the ruin was accomplished by the violence of storms and tempests, and not by the bravery of the English. But Queen Elizabeth, so far from looking on this as a diminution of her honor, gloried in it as a signal favor of Providence; and to commemorate the defeat of the invincible Armada of Spain, she had a medal struck, on the reverse of which is represented a fleet beaten by a tempest, and the ships falling foul upon one another, with this religious in-

scription: "*Afflavit Deus et Dissipantur*"—"God blew on them, and they were scattered."

In the early history of this country there was a remarkable instance of divine interposition in answer to prayer. In 1746, a French fleet was fitted out under the Duke d'Anville, of forty ships of war, and destined for the destruction of New-England. This fleet was of sufficient force to render that destruction, in the ordinary progress of things, certain; and it sailed from Chebucto, in Nova Scotia, for that purpose; but it was entirely destroyed by a terrible tempest on the night following a day of general fasting and prayer throughout New-England.

These facts show that prayer has power to avert national calamities, and to draw down the divine blessing upon communities, and they enforce the duty of earnest and continuous prayer for our country. And never did our country more need our importunate and believing prayers than at this time. Clouds have darkened our horizon, and caused some at least to fear for the continuance of our privileges, and it becomes us to beseech Him who controls the destinies of nations not to give us over in our sins, but to "turn us again, and to cause his face to shine" from behind the cloud, that we may be saved. Much wisdom is needed in the councils of our nation and in the administration of affairs; and we should pray for our rulers and "for all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." Let us pray that oppression may not lengthen her galling chain, that liberty may be secured to all, and that our national conflict may soon end in a righteous peace. This struggle has not taken place without the divine will, and let us pray that it may be controlled by divine power and conducted by divine wisdom to issues promotive of God's glory, and of truth and righteousness.

III. We shall now, in conclusion, very briefly present some considerations to enforce the duties of personal and combined activity in seeking the highest good of our land.

1. We should seek our country's welfare, because our own individual good is intimately connected with the general happiness and prosperity of the nation. This argument, taken from self-interest, is presented in our text: "Seek the peace of the city—for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." Every passenger is concerned in the safety of the ship in which he sails. Every citizen of a free government enjoys many rights and privileges in common with others, and what affects the general interest of one citizen will have its bearing on the condition of all. Society is made up of individuals, and those laws and principles of government and influences that affect society at large, affect the individuals of which that society is composed. And self-interest demands that we should seek to evangelize all who come under the influ-

ence of our institutions. The land in which we are permitted to dwell is yet to be the theatre of mighty events both in church and state. It is capable of sustaining a countless population, and men of all nations are pressing to our shores. God has a design in this mingling of nations and races—it *may* be to give us the opportunity, if we will seize it, to mould them, instrumentally, into the Christian image, or to use them to scourge us if we are unfaithful to our trust. These multiplied thousands of foreigners of different habits, faith, and hopes from ourselves, are our fellow-sovereigns. They choose with us the law-makers, and they will exert an influence either in sustaining or subverting our constitutions. They will do their part in forming the public opinion which is to govern the land, and if healthy influences are not brought to bear upon them they may spread corrupting influences which shall undermine our free institutions. Let Christians sleep, and let popery and infidelity and superstition manufacture public opinion, and the foundations of our religious faith will be undermined, and immorality and crime will be openly prevalent, and our civil privileges will soon be lost. The character of the people who occupy the new States and Territories of our country, unless cast into an evangelical mould, will, unavoidably, receive the impress of infidelity and error and vice; and with greater certainty than we now anticipate, may, in time, impart it to our whole country. And what is done this very *year* for our newly-settled and settling Territories, while yet in their embryo state, may determine their complexion and character for all coming time. And as our own individual interests are bound up with whatever affects the security and prosperity—the true glory and the true happiness of our country—our personal and combined activity should be called forth in seeking its highest good.

2. We should seek the highest good of our country, because by showing a genuine love for it, and seeking its true welfare, we do much to recommend the religion we profess. Patriotism is a part of religion, and he who is a true lover of God will be a genuine lover of his country also. It is true the Bible knows nothing of national antipathies, but, on the contrary, condemns the wicked and absurd prejudice which leads the people of one land to hate those of another, because they are under another government, talk another language, and are separated from them by a sea, a river, or a landmark. Still, in caring for our own land there are grounds of affection, and motives for benevolent action, which do not appertain to any other. One of these is *contiguity*. We are bound to do good to all men as we have opportunity, and we have better opportunities for doing good to those who are near than to those who are distant. The people who are starving at the antipodes ought to receive our bounty as soon and as far as we can send it to them, but the man who has just dropped down in utter

exhaustion, and is dying at our door, has especial claims upon us. We must care for the perishing heathen—but shall we forget the perishing American? To the former we can send missionaries, to the latter we can go ourselves. It will be to our shame to seem to care for *the distant heathen*, and yet to entirely neglect those who breathe the same air, and reside in the same vicinity. Our countrymen and neighbors and fellow-citizens must not be overlooked in our benevolent efforts. The best way to benefit the world at large is to fill the sphere around us *first* with Christian influence; and in doing this we shall be multiplying agencies for extending Christian influence gradually throughout the whole world. Home missions and foreign missions have both of them claims upon us, and the work of one can not be severed from that of the other. All we do for home is, in an indirect manner, something done for other lands. By spreading religion here, we are raising friends and funds for foreign missions. Our churches and schools, as fast as they are formed, are pressed in as auxiliaries to our missionary societies.

One nation has no more right to seek its own public interests exclusively, or in opposition to the public interests of other nations, than one member of the same family has to seek his own private interests exclusively, or in opposition to the private interests of the rest of the family. But as we elevate the character of our nation we confer a good upon other nations, for just in proportion to the elevation of its character, will the influence of its example be felt for good in other lands and nations.

3. Lastly, we should seek our country's welfare, because the work of supplying our land with the preached gospel and with religious institutions is the most important work to which the Christians in America are called at this time to devote their energies. A more important, or a more promising field can nowhere be found on the face of the globe, and the cultivation of this field belongs especially to us. This work has an overwhelming importance, because of the magnitude of our territory, the multitude of our people, the vastness of our wealth, the greatness of our power, and the influence of our example. What a vast field for Christian labors the Western States of themselves present. Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska, all present to us the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us;" they all need missionary aid. These Western States have ten times the extent in territory of all the New-England States, and they all have urgent need of men to preach the gospel in their rising cities and on their broad prairies. In addition to these Western States, there are vast fields to be occupied in the Rocky Mountain slopes. By these terms we embrace the entire portion of our country west of Nebraska, containing nearly or quite one million square miles, or about one third of the

whole territory of the United States. Into this territory, with the exception of California, great tides of population are now pouring. For though some parts are barren, and some rugged, cold, and mountainous, a great gold and silver bearing belt stretches across it from north to south, even to the Rocky Mountains, in whose ledges is incalculable wealth. Cities of considerable magnitude are already springing up in Colorado, Nevada, and Idaho Territories; and missionaries should be sent at once to look after the spiritual welfare and learn the wants of those rising communities. Then, too, California and Oregon and Washington Territory have lost none of their importance. Great States are destined to grow up on the Pacific coast, and their commerce and agriculture, independently of mineral resources, will sustain a great population. In addition to all this, as fast as the rebellion is suppressed, there opens to us a field of missionary operations in the Southern States, from the most of which we had been excluded.

This is a brief outline of the present and prospective work of home missions. Who does not see that with such immense Territories opening to us all at once, at the West and South, the dawn of a new era in home missionary operations is breaking on our vision? and that more prayer and larger contributions are demanded of the church? And can there be a more important object of zeal for American Christians than their own country—the supplying of our rapidly increasing population with able, faithful ministers? Our religious policy must be a *home* policy. The waste places of our homestead must be cultivated. On our land hang, in a great measure, the future interests of the globe. Hence the unspeakable importance of our churches concentrating, in a great measure, their religious efforts upon their own country. Oh, if this country, "beautiful for situation," with boundless resources and prospects of dazzling brightness, would but consecrate its wealth, sanctify its talent, apprehend its responsibilities, and direct its power in the path of true greatness, its destiny would be as full of glory as its present position is replete with danger. Ere long it would be "the joy of the whole earth.' The world would have before it, on a vast scale, an illustration of the divine precept, "Righteousness exalteth a nation."

Does not every aspect of this subject give fresh impulse to Christian zeal, and summon every Christian and every Christian institution to renewed effort and prayer? Our hope for our country is in God, and in the gospel of his Son. That gospel is our pole-star and compass. It will guide America to a destiny of goodness and of glory, and fill the world with light and salvation.

SERMON XVII.

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MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."—Acts 20 : 35.

This statement is in direct conflict with the most cherished sentiments and the almost universal practice of mankind. The great mass of men repudiate the doctrine; they do not believe a word of it; and they base life and action on the very reverse principle. And yet the Bible is clear and explicit in its teachings on this point.

The doctrine of the text is one of the fundamental principles of God's economy; it has its foundation in the divine nature, and pervades the whole system of the divine government. It is simply the law of benevolence; and if men would universally recognize the claims of this divine law, and render obedience to it, it would convert this world into a paradise.

Sin is *selfishness*. It arrays man against this divine law. It puts *self* before the brotherhood; makes *self* the center and end of life; asserts that the highest duty of man and the greatest good consist in receiving and enjoying. And herein lies its enormity. The glory of God, the general good, the divine law of happiness, are all sacrificed to the demand of an all-engrossing selfishness.

The doctrine of the text is, that it is better to impart good than to receive it, better to give away than to hoard, better to serve than to be ministered to, better to seek out and relieve the poor and care for the afflicted and perishing, than to have supreme regard for self, and to study and seek, as the end of life, self-gratification; in other words, that there is a higher and purer happiness, and a surer and more blessed prosperity, resulting from the practice of Christian benevolence than from the indulgence of selfishness.

It is a blessed experience to *receive* good at the hands of our fellow-men. The sympathy of friends, in times of joy and of sor-

row, is sweet; and help rendered in the day of need, is most grateful. It is a blessed experience to *enjoy* the favors of a bountiful Providence—to receive into our souls the light and love and grace of God our Saviour. No one doubts this. But the text affirms that it is *more blessed still to bestow upon others*; to enrich our fellow-men with the affluence of our sympathy and love and kind services; to serve God and the world in the exercise of a lofty Christian benevolence; to be one's self a living center of light and good and blessed influence to our fellow-men.

This is the principle. Let us apply it in a few particulars.

1. *It is more blessed to communicate useful knowledge of any kind than merely to acquire it.* There is a love of knowledge for its own sake. A Newton finds rational and sublime enjoyment in piercing the thick vail which envelops nature, in grasping and controlling the most subtle of her elements, in measuring and weighing the worlds and systems which roll through infinite space, and ascertaining the laws which govern the material kingdom of God. A Bacon finds rational delight in exploring the secret chambers of the mind; in pushing investigation into new fields of thought and inquiry, exposing false theories in mental science, shedding fresh light on the human mind, and demonstrating the harmony of philosophy with the teachings of the Scriptures. A Cuvier finds a lofty and ennobling pleasure in delving among the fossil remains of former life, and, by study and comparison and patient and thorough investigation, refuting the theories of infidel science in regard to the antiquity of man's creation, and establishing the truth of the Mosaic account. And so of Hugh Miller, and our own Hitchcock, in collecting testimony from the rocks, from ocean caverns and river beds, from mountain and valley, from living and from extinct animal tribes and types of life, to illustrate the infinite wonders of God's creation, and the essential harmony of Geology and Revelation.

Such men find a high and a real pleasure in the pursuit of their favorite studies. The mental excitement connected with it; the expansion and ennobling of the mind by means of it; the discovery of new truths, new harmonies, and new evidences to confirm the faith; and especially the enlarged capacity to understand and appreciate God—the sum of all the philosophies, and the end of all being and all economies—are an abundant reward for all the toil bestowed.

But such men are not satisfied with knowledge simply *acquired*. Knowledge is not the end they seek—only the means. To enrich the world with the fruit of their superior wisdom, to open new fountains in the desert to refresh and gladden the race, to hold forth the torch of truth in order to dispel the ignorance and superstition of mankind and lift them up into a higher intelligence

and virtue, is their ambition and ultimate aim. This it is that cheers the student at the midnight lamp, that lifts him above the mere desire for gain and applause, that makes him strong and heroic in his task of climbing the mountains of human thought and study. Those serene and lofty heights he would reach, not to gratify a selfish vanity and dream away an isolated existence, but that he may carry down into the plain the lessons learned on the mount, and impart to others his inspired visions and choicest treasures.

Newton, we are told, "held it as his highest glory, not simply that he had gone farther than any other man in his researches, and enlarged the boundary of his knowledge, but to have made the evidence of God's existence, and the dispensations of his power and wisdom, better understood by men." Noble sentiment! That great mind found it more blessed to give forth its wonderful treasures of knowledge than to drink in the truth.

There is a pleasure in giving from our choicest stores of wisdom and knowledge for the benefit of others, slowly and painfully as we have acquired them, which is denied to the man who would hoard them, and use them only for selfish ends. There is a peculiar, a divine satisfaction felt in teaching rational mind; in kindling the divine intelligence with the fire of immortal thought. Do you doubt it? Take that ignorant and degraded boy out of the street; teach him knowledge; wake up and guide that immortal principle which now sleeps in his soul; fill his mind with God and with the noble lessons of Bible wisdom, and make of him, with God's blessing, a wise, thinking, virtuous, and useful man—and you will find a reward in doing it which no wealth can purchase.

Now, the highest and most important of all knowledge is that which the *Bible* contains. Here are treasured the riches of God's infinite mind. Here life and immortality are brought to light. Here are the "deep things" of wisdom—the knowledge which makes wise unto salvation. This is the end of all philosophies, the sum of all the sciences. To fear God and keep his commandments, is the highest virtue: and the making known of this divine word to men who are perishing in the ignorance and guilt of sin, is the highest happiness we know any thing of. The angels of heaven would gladly vacate their seats for the privilege of doing it. There is no work which brings man so nigh to God as this. There is no blessing so divine as that which comes upon one from souls reached by the gospel and saved through his means. Such trophies form a "crown of rejoicing" such as no warrior or victor in the race for earthly good ever won.

Oh, if it is blessed to feel and know that one's self is forgiven and accepted; to have the divine favor freely imparted to the soul; to taste of the love of God, and the joy of his salvation, and the preciousness of Christ, from day to day—it is more

blessed still to impart of our experience to others; to tell friends and neighbors what God has done for us; to hold forth the Word of Life to our fellow-sinners, and strive to kindle in their hearts the joys and hopes which animate our own. The Christian who puts his "light under a bushel," who confines his religious knowledge and experience to his own breast, who lives for his own salvation solely, rather than for Christ and the salvation of others, acts a part as unwise and injurious to himself as it is unworthy of his profession, and contrary to the spirit and principles of Christianity. A Christian never has so much light in his own mind as when he is shedding most light on the minds of others. His own experience of Christ is most precious when he is doing most to make him known to others. If he comes to act on the selfish principle which is dominant in the world, all his satisfaction in the service of Christ will quickly be lost. Failing to minister to others, his own soul will become barren. Absorbing all the light of God's grace, instead of reflecting it, his own mind will become darkened, and his confidence and integrity will slip away from him.

2. It is far more blessed *to honor God with our substance than to acquire it for its own sake*, or *to spend it in self-gratification*. There are men whose sole anxiety is to *make* money. Life's one end and great struggle with them, is to accumulate riches. Their only happiness is the sordid one of adding dollar to dollar, house to house, farm to farm. They are dissatisfied and miserable unless they are every day adding to their earthly gains. They never spend, willingly, never give away, never put to benevolent use, what, through God's blessing, they have acquired. *Gather together and hold on to it*—this is their disposition and the sum of life.

There are others who lavish their all on *self-gratification*. They are free and generous in spending, but it is only in the line of selfishness. They indulge their tastes and appetites, gratify pride and ambition, and aggrandize their family; and this is all the benefit they derive from wealth. They take no higher view of their stewardship than this. They toil and win only to squander it in a way that is most offensive to God, and injurious to themselves They have no conception of the true end of wealth.

As a *means of usefulness*, wealth is a blessing. It is an ennobling work, in which we do find men engaged, trading, toiling, and giving their time and energy to business, that they may devote the fruits of it to Christ and his cause. Such men acquire money for a benevolent end. And they find it blessed to toil for it, and blessed to disburse it. Thus sought and thus expended, it becomes one of the choisest means of happiness as well as of good.

There is no man really so poor as he who multiplies the means

of life and knows not how to use them, so as to make himself and others happy. His wealth is all in dust, which will one day be scattered to the winds, when it might be converted by him into the blessings of many ready to perish, and a name which is as ointment poured forth. The life of such a one is as barren of good as the heath which drinks in the rain and the sunshine, but gives back no verdure or fertility. With the means of making himself and others happy, he lives only to be despised and useless. He does nothing to enrich the earth; he only encumbers it. His mission has no mercy in it, no sympathy, no ministries of good; it is only and utterly selfish. The poor never bless him. The fatherless never look up to him. The widow's tears and thanks never reward him. His name, which he might have embalmed in a thousand grateful hearts, is spoken and remembered only in sorrow, if not with execration. And though his wealth may rear a splendid monument over his ashes, and emblazon on it a high-sounding epitaph, yet will it only serve to invite the finger of scorn, and posterity will pronounce him:

"Creation's blank—creation's blot."

That man is truly rich and happy who has a heart to give freely of what he hath to the cause of human happiness. He may of his abundance, be able to give his thousands and tens of thousands. (Oh, blessed privilege! may God raise up many such in these times!) But if you have only the poor widow's two mites to give, you shall have the reward. No man was ever the poorer for what he gave, from a benevolent feeling, to promote God's glory on the earth, and advance human happiness. And it is only when we give so as to *feel* it; give so as to call the spirit of self-denial into action; give so as to bring the soul into sympathy with the Cross, that we experience the full luxury of giving—the value of property as a means of noble happiness. Then it is that the increase, a thousand fold, returns into our own heart, and the two mites of pious sacrifice swell into a great blessing and a precious memorial.

3. The principle of the text holds good *in its application to personal efforts for the salvation of souls.* In religion as in other things God has ordained that if we will not work, neither shall we eat; if we fail to sow, we shall not reap; if we will not do our duty, we shall not be blessed. The Christian who never loses sight of self; whose chief anxiety is about his own hopes and welfare; who puts forth no earnest efforts, and is willing to make no sacrifices to save others—will find religion very barren of comfort, and will have abundant occasion to exclaim, "Oh, my leanness! my leanness!" "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to pov-

erty." The experience of Christian life furnishes striking exemplifications of this principle. The more we do to bless others, the more we ourselves are blessed: while watering others our own souls are refreshed. The less selfish and the more expansive and Christ-like is our piety, the more will our own graces flourish, and our enjoyment of God's service be increased. The active, working, pains-taking, self-denying disciple is always blessed—his hope is always joyful and bright, and his faith strong; while the indolent, self-indulgent, ease-taking disciple is always complaining of doubt, and weakness, and despondency.

I appeal to your own experience if it be not so. When have you enjoyed religion most? When has your mind been freest from doubt? When have you had the greatest freedom and satisfaction in prayer? When has the largest measure of spiritual prosperity been meted out to you? I can answer for you. It was when the glory of God so filled your mind, and a care for others so weighed on your soul, that you forgot self entirely; it was when you were most active, and faithful, and self-denying in Christian duty, and gave yourself up to the blessed work of saving men and honoring God. If ever the smiles of a Saviour's love gladdened your heart, and the peace and joy of angels welled up in your souls, it has been in those times and exercises which baptized you into the spirit of the Cross, and made you for the time dead to every consideration but the honor of Christ and the salvation of souls.

It is on this principle that Christians are, generally, so joyful and so prosperous in times of revival. Their attention, and anxiety, and efforts, are now directed mainly to the conversion of sinners and the prosperity of Zion. The Spirit of God rouses them to action. The Providence of God thrusts them forth into his vineyard to work. Baptized afresh into Christ, their hearts now burn with zeal for God's glory, and melt and flow out in prayer and pious labor. Self is forgotten. They cease to pore over their gloomy experience. The pressure of dying souls is felt. The cry of anxious souls thrills them; and the new song, bursting from fresh converts, inspires them with new life.

Such a season is not only one of great spiritual rejoicing and comfort, but also one of rapid growth in grace. Many a Christian and many a church has experienced and manifested more of the divine power of the Christian religion in a single revival than during an age of ordinary life.

The story of the Alpine traveler illustrates this subject. A solitary man was overtaken in one of those fearful storms which rage in those lofty mountains. He lost his way, and after wandering about for days became too exhausted to proceed farther, and laid down on the snow to die. Soon he heard a faint voice crying, "Help! help!" It was the voice of suffering humanity,

and it went to his heart. It was the cry, doubtless, of a fellow-traveler, lost and dying in those eternal solitudes, and it roused his own fainting and dying nature. He could not lie there and die with that plaintive cry for help sounding in his ears. With a desperate effort he roused himself from his lethargic state, and made his way whence the sound seemed to come. He found a man nearly buried in the snow, his limbs rigid, and life fast ebbing away. The sight appealed to his humanity and quickened his energies. He knelt down by him and began to rub and chafe the benumbed limbs. His heart warmed toward the helpless stranger while thus engaged, and for an hour or more he continued the life-restoring work, till the man revived and stood upon his feet, and with tears of gratitude thanked his unknown deliverer. *And the very effort to give life to another had brought back the warm blood into his own veins and saved his life.* And now the sound of a distant horn announced the approach of a guide, and they were both saved. So true are our Saviour's words: "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

4. One application more of the text and I will close. *It is blessed to dispense good in the various kind offices and ministries of social life.* In a world so full of sin and sorrow and want and suffering, there is need of kindly sympathy and aid, and the constant interchange of civility, attentions, and brotherly services. Whatever our station and circumstances in life may be, we are not independent of our fellow-men; we can not afford to forego their sympathies and services. And this is especially true of the poor and friendless, the lonely widow and dependent orphan, the sick and afflicted and unfortunate. Such stand in great need of human aid and sympathy. And it is a privilege an angel might covet, to be an almoner of God's bounty to his needy children, and a ministering spirit to the sorrowful and the suffering. To be permitted to dry up many a stream of human misery and guilt—to make glad many heavy hearts—to open fountains of useful knowledge and life in this desolate world—and to help on the cause of humanity and religion, affords as noble a happiness—I say it reverently—as Heaven itself has to offer. How significant is the apostle's definition of religion: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." And was ever a man the poorer, the less happy, the less respected and loved, for thus treading in the footsteps of the divine Jesus?

There would be fewer unhappy children of affluence and leisure in the world if they only acted on the principle of this high law. They would not complain so much as now of *ennui*; time would

not drag on in so dull and monotonous a round; they would not be so overburdened with sentimentality, and corrupt to the core of their nature by innate selfishness, if they would live for some useful object; if they would go forth and put their hearts in contact with the actual world of suffering and sorrowing humanity; explore the wants and woes of their less favored brothers and sisters; carry the tract and the Bible to the ignorant and the wayward; minister at the bedside of the sick and wounded and dying; and have an eye and a heart and a blessing for mankind under every want and burden. Such a ministry of active benevolence would soon dissipate life's dullness, cure them of their false notions and mock sensibilities, eat out the mean and enervating selfishness of their hearts, and teach them that the high end of life is to be like God, the great fountain of good—to borrow light and life from the central sun of all being but to reflect it forth throughout our appointed orbit. The "Ragged-Schools" system of London, and the "Five-Points" missionary enterprise of New-York, and various similar works of Christian reform, and the example of such heroic and self-sacrificing maidens as Florence Nightingale, are teaching woman that she has a higher and a more blessed mission on earth to accomplish than to shine in the saloons of fashion, or dream away existence on the couch of luxurious ease, or fritter mind and heart away over fictitious beings and sorrows. None can perform the grateful ministries of social life like woman; and nothing will do so much to elevate and ennoble woman herself, and give her power for good, and ally her with angelic beings, as a full measure of this new baptism of Christ-like sympathy and self-sacrifice which has begun to descend upon the sex. Oh, for a full measure of the baptism!

"'Tis a little thing,
To give a cup of water; yet its draught
Of cool refreshment, drained by fevered lips,
May give a shock of pleasure to the frame,
More exquisite than when nectarian juice
Renews the life of joy in happier hours.
It is a little thing to speak a phrase
Of common comfort, which by daily use)
Has almost lost its sense; yet on the ear
Of him who thought to die unmourned, 'twill fall
Like choicest music."

How brilliant is yonder sun! For sixty centuries he has rolled through these heavens, and dispensed light and health to all the earth, and yet he has lost none of his glory or power. He is ever giving forth floods of light and heat, and receiving nothing back—a fact which our philosophy has not been able fully to explain—and yet the supply is not diminished, he is as full of blessing to-day and as rich in beauty as in the day when Adam first bask-

ed in his genial rays. Emblem of the infinite God! So he is ever giving. There is a ceaseless and infinite flow of power, wisdom, and goodness from him. The universe, with all its teeming worlds of beauty and grandeur and forms of life, is but the outgoing of his infinite mind. He is never weary in giving. There is an infinite tide all the while flowing out, and yet the ocean is not empty. Giving doth not impoverish, nor withholding enrich him. It is his happiness to communicate freely of himself.

And this is the law of heaven. The angels know no other. They are perfectly happy, for they are perfectly benevolent. And this law, made the basis and rule of human conduct, would make a heaven of our world.

Brethren! we only *half believe the Bible*, so imperfectly have we studied and practiced its teachings. There are depths of meaning in its promises which our weak faith has never yet sounded. There are heights of glory and blessedness in its provisions which our groveling souls have never attained to. There is a breadth and power of life in its principles of which we have no adequate conception. We need a stronger faith. We need a more intimate and habitual communion with the life and work of Christ, and the great and eternal principles which underlie them. Oh! when shall the church of redeemed sinners come to understand this chief law of Heaven, and give to the world the practical benefits of that knowledge and experience, "It is more blessed to give than to receive?"

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

Prayer Answered.

ABRAHAM prayed, "O that Ishmael might live before thee;" and God said, "As for Ishmael, I have heard thee." Lot prayed, and Zoar became a city of refuge for him, while Sodom and Gomorrah were consumed. Jacob prayed, and his name was changed to Israel. His descendants cried to God in their bondage, and he stretched out the right hand of his power for their deliverance. Moses cried unto the Lord, and the waters gushed from Horeb. Hannah prayed, and then testified, "The Lord hath given me my petition." Samuel besought Jehovah in Israel's behalf, and great thunder discomfited the Philistines. Solomon had a wise and an understanding heart because he had asked this thing. Elijah on Carmel prayed, "Hear me, O Lord, hear me." Soon the multitude exclaimed, "The Lord he is the God; the Lord he is the God." Elijah prayed, and the [redacted]'s

not drag on in so dull and monotonous a rou[illegible]tion to sustain, a be so overburdened with sentimentality, ar[illegible]n, a Fountain to re- of their nature by innate selfishness, if t[illegible]s the Shadow from the useful object; if they would go forth [illegible]Bread of life, the Morn- tact with the actual world of sufferir[illegible], the Sun of Righteous- explore the wants and woes of th[illegible]*ll, and in all.* No creature sisters; carry the tract and the P[illegible]s a substitute for him; but he ward; minister at the bedside [illegible]supply the place of every crea- ing; and have an eye and a [illegible]ure. He is all my salvation, and under every want and bur[illegible] all my desire; my hope, my peace, olence would soon dissip[illegible] of my life, my glory and joy. notions and mock sens[illegible], call- selfishness of their b[illegible]verance life is to be like G[illegible]ercy to his and life from the[illegible] the Lord, throughout ou[illegible] my voice." of London, [illegible] swift wing to York, and [illegible] him that his sup- ample [illegible] not in vain. From Nighti[illegible] and the wave Jonah more [illegible] cry, and the Lord sal[illegible] Zacharias prayed, and an u[illegible] the presence of God [illegible] with glad tidings. Barti- [illegible] cried aloud, and glorified [illegible] for sight bestowed. The dy- [illegible] thief uttered one prayer, and Paradise opened its gates to re- ceive him.

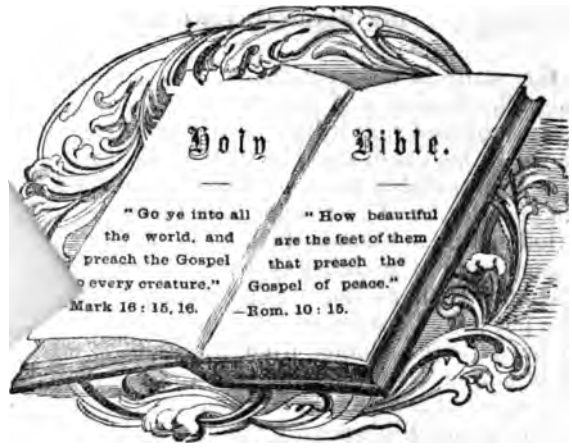
Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but thou art the strength of my heart and my portion forever. I can not be exposed, I can not be friendless, I can not be poor, I can not be fearful, I can not be sorrowful, with thee.

Blessedness of Believing.

THE happiness we derive from creatures is like a beggar's garment—it is made up of pieces and patches, and is worth very little after all. But the blessedness we derive from the Saviour is single and complete. In him all fullness dwells. He is coëval with every period. He is answerable to every condition. He is a Physician to heal, a Counselor to plead, a King to govern, a Friend to sympathize, a Father to provide.

Every Man's Work made Manifest.

THE disclosures of the judgment will be exhaustive. There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known! Much of the past with us is forgotten. Its errors, its down-right sins—we have passed them by, and fondly hope they may never afflict us with their bitter upbraidings; but the books will be opened, and on their radient pages the whole story of human guilt will be found faithfully recorded. We had forgotten, but it was not forgotten, for the infinite memory of God had treasured all within the resources of the eternal mind, and in the great day of account they will be all marshaled forth to confront the soul with all the reality of their fearful revelations.


Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace." —Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON XVIII.

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FUNERAL DISCOURSE OF REV. DANIEL WALDO.

"And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died."—Genesis 5: 27.

Notwithstanding the individual here referred to lived longer than any other inhabitant of this world has ever done, his life occupying about one sixth of the whole period since the creation, all that we know concerning him is comprised in two or three sentences. He was born in the year of the world six hundred and eighty-seven, and was the son of Enoch, one of the brightest stars that appeared in all the patriarchal ages. In the year eight hundred and seventy-four was born to him Lamech, to whom belongs the dishonorable distinction of being the originator of polygamy. In the year sixteen hundred and fifty-six he died, at the wonderful age of nine hundred and sixty-nine years. Thus endeth the record concerning him. What was his occupation or character, or what the details of the history of his life, we have no data from which to form even a conjecture. The death of Methuselah occurred the same year with the general deluge;

and as the name is compounded of two Hebrew words, one of which signifies *he dies*, and the other, *the sending forth of water*, it has been supposed that it had in it something prophetic of the event to which his death stood in such immediate proximity.

Though Methuselah's age considerably exceeded that of any of his cotemporaries, or of any other man that ever lived, the ordinary period of human life was, during the whole patriarchal dispensation, much longer than it has ever been since. One reason of this, no doubt, was that, as the writing of the history of this period was to be postponed for many centuries, and the materials for it were to be gathered chiefly from tradition, it was desirable, for the sake of authenticity, that the facts to be recorded should have passed through but few hands; for, though Divine inspiration might have secured an infallible record, under any circumstances, yet it is the manner of our God never to interpose a miraculous agency for the accomplishment of his purposes, until all ordinary providential influences are exhausted. From about the time of Moses, human life settled down to nearly its present period of duration, though there are a few cases in which the ordinary limit is considerably transcended. As God does nothing without a purpose, so, no doubt, He has wise ends in lengthening out the life of here and there an individual to an extraordinary age. It will be a legitimate use of the text, as well as in harmony with the spirit of the occasion, to inquire briefly *what some of these ends are.*

I. I remark, in the first place, that cases of extreme old age are fitted *to reproduce and render more impressive the teachings of Divine Providence.*

Though the Providence of God—thanks to the Divine goodness—is not our *only* teacher, yet it is always delivering to us lessons of truth and wisdom; and these lessons will ever be found to be in exact accordance with—I might say a living commentary upon—the more direct and definite teachings of his word. The voice of God is uttering truths, in some form or other, in every event that falls within the range of our experience or observation; and these truths are suited to the different circumstances and wants of our intellectual and moral nature. Providence enlightens and instructs us, bringing home to our very senses the perfections of the Divine nature, and the principles of the Divine government. Providence admonishes and rebukes us, by exhibiting to our view the legitimate tendencies of moral evil, and pointing us away from the path that leads to death. Providence encourages us when we are prone to despond, by surrounding us with examples of the triumph of fortitude and perseverance against the most adverse influences. Providence comforts us in our sorrow, by making one event explanatory of another, and leading us to expect, in regard to our own experience, that, sooner or later, light will shine out of darkness. And while there are these deliverances of Provi-

dence in the ordinary course of things, still more emphatic are they in extraordinary events, which, by presenting human nature in some new phase, well nigh bring the mind of the world to a pause. We may receive these lessons or not, according to our pleasure; but that they are always in the process of being addressed to us, is as certain as that the sun shines and the earth revolves according to God's ordinance.

Now, while we are bound to hear the voice of God, as it speaks to us in current events, so, also, are we to recognize a Divine communication in the past; and we are to study the past, as a means not merely of gratifying an idle curiosity, but of enlarging our views and improving our characters. We may be thankful, indeed, for a well authenticated record of the years or the centuries that have preceded our time; but who does not feel that we get a far more impressive view of great events, from conversing with those who witnessed them, or, perhaps, had an agency in bringing them about? Of the stirring scenes of the Revolution, that gave us our independence—of the battle of Bunker Hill, or Saratoga, or Yorktown, for instance, you can get a correct and definite idea from history; but when you come to converse with one who was a witness and a sharer of the bloody strife, the scene comes up to you with a freshness that makes it seem almost like a present reality. And so in respect to every thing: not only can the men of a bygone age tell us of much which has never been recorded, and which would otherwise be lost to the world, but their testimony throws us back into immediate contact with the times or the events of which they speak, and thus the voice of God comes to us far more directly and impressively than it could through any other medium.

II. In cases of extreme old age, we have an illustration of both *the sovereignty and the goodness of God.*

Yonder is a man who is scarcely in the decline of life when he has filled up his threescore years and ten. He has lived on till he has completed one century; and he is carrying with him, into the second, a mind so bright and a heart so warm and genial that you would say that neither had ever been touched by the frost of age. That man, it may be, stands alone in the community in which he lives; perhaps in traveling a great distance you will not find another, whose birth dates back to so remote a period as his. And wherefore is it that he is the subject of this marked distinction—that though he has seen three generations die, his own time has not come yet? Is it that he was originally constituted with extraordinary physical energy, by which he has been enabled to withstand the shocks of a century? But thousands, who, in their youth, surpassed him in powers of both activity and endurance, have been asleep in their graves so long that scarcely any memorial remains of them. Is it that he has

been a model of carefulness in all his habits of living, that he has kept himself within a healthful atmosphere, and has brought temperance, and cheerfulness, and exercise, and all the other handmaids of health, to his aid? But multitudes have *been* and have *done* all this, and yet half a century has elapsed since they were gathered. The truth is, you can resolve that instance of wonderful longevity into nothing short of the sovereignty of God; the only answer to be given to the question, why he stands as the sole survivor, or as one of a few survivors, of his generation, is, that our times are in God's hand, and that He alone fixes the bound that we can not pass. True, indeed, that life has been preserved through the operation of physical laws, with which we are familiar; but we are to bear in mind that these laws are ordained of God, and are nothing else than the channel through which his almighty power and infinite wisdom display themselves.

But here, also, is a marked expression of the Divine goodness. Be it that the person whom you contemplate has been, during nearly his whole life, an humble disciple of the Lord Jesus, *who* can begin to form an adequate estimate of the amount of blessing of which he has been the subject? If the light is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing to the eyes to behold the sun; if the indulgence of the senses, within proper limits, is a legitimate gratification; if friendship, and social life, and the means of intellectual growth are to be reckoned as blessings—then, surely, such a life as that of which I speak, must, in respect even to temporal benefits, prove the exuberance of the Divine goodness. But when we come to consider this long life as a scene of spiritual experience and activity—as a period in which the heart has been all the time growing purer under the united action of the Providence and Word and Spirit of God, in which the life has been becoming increasingly prolific of good deeds, and the immortal crown, reserved as a recompense for them, has been constantly gaining a fresh lustre—can any human language do justice to that gracious agency by which, under such circumstances, the present existence has been so protracted? For though it be true that Heaven is better than earth, that there is more happiness in the reward than in the labors and struggles that have preceded it, yet these labors and struggles form the divinely appointed preparation for the glory that is to follow; and the longer the discipline lasts, and the better it is improved, the richer will be the inheritance that is to succeed. Is not that individual, then, most graciously dealt by, who, instead of being taken to Heaven in his youth, as soon as he has received the impress of the Divine image, is kept back from the full measure of his reward, until, by a long life of vigorous activity, and self-denial, and spiritual culture, he is prepared to join the community of the saved at an advanced stage of purity and joy?

III. I only add, in the third place, that instances of extraordinary longevity, such as we sometimes witness, impressively teach the lesson that *man, in his best state, is altogether vanity.*

As we are accustomed to judge of things by comparison, we naturally enough, in comparing the veteran of a hundred years with the infant in the cradle, become impressed with the idea that life with him is something more than a vapor that appears and then vanishes. But let the man whose earthly existence has actually been thus protracted, testify, and he will tell you that, however long his life may seem to others, to himself it appears as a shadow, a hand's breadth—a dream when one awaketh. Well may he ask, What is the duration of a life like this compared with that of many of the works of men's hands, which still remain firm as the mountains? What, compared with the earth we tread upon and the heavens which overhang and illuminate it? What, compared with this thinking, reasoning principle within me, or with that Almighty Power that sustains and controls creation? In such a light as this, surely the longest life dwindles to a point. Verily, the man who has traveled through his century, is but a creature of yesterday.

But, notwithstanding the period of man's continuance here is, at the longest, so very brief, there is an importance attached to it that outruns the farthest stretch of human thought. For it bears directly upon his whole eternity. Here his thoughts, his affections, his actions, every thing pertaining to his character, receives a decisive and enduring direction. Here are gathered the elements of retribution, which will develop themselves in the joys or the woes of the next world. Here man, according to the influences to which he surrenders himself, becomes moulded into a seraph or a fiend. Let this period of probation, then, whether its limit l nearer or more remote, be sacred to the preparation for an immor tal life. Let the passing days and years be so improved that the record, both within and above, shall minister only to our joy. Let the vanity that pertains to our present state quicken our desires and our efforts for that higher, purer, nobler existence, to which, through the grace of the Lord Jesus, it is our privilege to aspire.

The train of thought into which we have now fallen has, I trust, prepared us to contemplate the remarkable life which has just come to a close,—the singularly blameless and elevated character which we are assembled to honor and embalm. But, of course, it is only a general outline of the life, and a rapid glance at the character, that will consist with the necessary brevity of these funeral exercises.

Our lamented venerable friend was born in Windham, Scotland Parish, Connecticut, on the 10th of September, 1762—thirteen years before the commencement of the War that terminated the allegiance of this country to Great Britain. He was the ninth of

thirteen children, eleven of whom lived to become heads of families. His parents were both exemplary professors of religion, and were careful and faithful in the Christian training of their children. His early years were spent, partly in laboring on his father's farm, and partly in attending a district school in the neighborhood. He remained at home till the year 1778, when, at the age of sixteen, he was drafted as a soldier for a month's service, during a time of imminent peril, at New-London. That term having expired, he returned home, but, almost immediately after, enlisted as a volunteer in the service of the State.

He now proceeded to Horse Neck, where he remained for five months, and was then taken prisoner and carried to New-York. He was arrested and captured, not by British soldiers, but by Tories, then known by the epithet of *Cow-boys*. He was standing sentinel on a dark, rainy night, when, owing to the temporary withdrawment of another sentinel from his post, a party came rushing upon him, one of whom snapped his gun, pointed at him, with a manifest intention of taking his life; but, as a good Providence would have it, the gun remained undischarged. Whereupon, Mr. Waldo laid down his own gun, acknowledged himself a prisoner, and as such claimed protection. He sat down in perfect calmness, and witnessed for some time the depredations of the invading party, and then was marched off with some twenty or thirty others to the city of New-York. They reached their destination sometime the next day, and were taken immediately to the far-famed "Sugar-House," then the grand depot for prisoners. Here he found about four hundred men, most of them physically and morally degraded, suffering from stinted and miserable rations, and forming a company in which virtue or even decency could have been little at home. In this dismal abode he was closely confined for two months, except as he was allowed occasionally to go out under a guard. As soon as he regained his liberty by being exchanged, he set out to walk home; but his strength now failed; and his brother, who lived in Sharon, Connecticut, being informed of his condition, met him and took him to his own house, where he remained for some time, and then returned to his paternal abode.

Shortly after his return, he suffered an attack of fever and ague, which, for three or four months, rendered him incapable of any labor; though the disease left him in more vigorous health than he had enjoyed for some time before. On his recovery, he resumed his labors on the farm, and continued them without intermission till he had reached the age of twenty-one. About one year before this, his mind took a decidedly religious turn, in which originated the desire to devote himself to his Redeemer in the ministry of reconciliation. Having, in due time, formed the purpose to do this, he went to Somers, Connecticut, to prosecute his studies preparatory to entering college, under his cousin, the good

and great Dr. Charles Backus. But scarcely had he commenced his studies, when his eyes failed in consequence of excessive application, and he returned home, doubtful whether, after all, he should not be obliged to relinquish his favorite object. Subsequently, however, his eyes recovered, in some degree, their strength, and he returned to Somers, and was fitted for college in the almost incredibly brief period of eight months.

He entered Yale College in 1784, and graduated in 1788. During the last two years of his college course, he occupied the same room with Jeremiah Mason, who afterwards became one of the brightest stars of the legal profession in the United States; and at their graduation they shared together a forensic dispute.

Immediately on leaving college, Mr. Waldo commenced the study of divinity, under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Hart, of Preston, then one of the most distinguished theological teachers in New England. After prosecuting his studies for about a year, he was licensed to preach by the Association of Windham county, then holding its session at Pomfret. His first sermon was preached in South Mansfield; shortly after which he went to Bristol, Connecticut, and preached three months; thence to Cornwall, and preached three months; thence to Torrington, and preached three months; and thence to West Hartford, where he passed some two months, partly as a student, and partly as a guest, in the house of the Rev. Dr. Perkins.

Toward the close of the year 1791, Mr. Waldo accepted an invitation to preach as a candidate at West Suffield, Connecticut, and in due time he was called to become the pastor of that church. Having signified his acceptance of the call, he was ordained and installed there on the 24th of May, 1792.

Though the congregation of which he took charge had been somewhat distracted previous to his settlement among them, they became united under his ministry, and remained so during nearly the whole period of his pastorship. He was privileged to pass through several seasons of special religious interest, which were followed by considerable additions to the communion of the church. Owing to a delinquency on the part of the parish in paying his salary, he became somewhat straitened in his worldly circumstances; and I suppose that it was on this account that, toward the close of his ministry here, he took a mission of six months, for two successive years, under the Connecticut Missionary Society, into Wayne county, Pennsylvania, and the southern counties of New York. This, too, was a principal cause of his resigning his charge, as he did, in 1809; though I think I have heard him say that he was influenced to this partly by the terrible affliction which had overtaken him some time before, in the mental derangement of his wife.

On leaving Suffield he went to Colchester (Westchester Parish), and, for three months supplied the pulpit which had then been

recently vacated by the dismission of the Rev. Ezra Stiles Ely, afterward Dr. Ely, of Philadelphia. Thence he went to Salem, distant a few miles from Colchester, where he supplied upwards of six months. Having fulfilled his engagement here, he made a visit to Andover, Massachusetts, and there made the acquaintance of the Rev. Dr. Pearson, whose character he greatly admired, and whose memory he cherished to the last with profound veneration. It was through the influence of that eminent man that he was employed as a supply by the church in Cambridgeport, for one year, in 1810 and 1811; and during his residence here he made many valuable acquaintances, among whom were the President and several of the Professors of Harvard College.

When the year for which he had engaged at Cambridgeport had expired, he went, under the patronage of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, on a three months' mission, more particularly to visit the schools and promote the cause of education, in Rhode Island. After having performed this service, the same Society continued him, for a year, in the same field, in missionary labor of a more general character. Subsequent to this period, until 1820, he was stationed at Greenwich, except for three months in the year, when he was traversing the State. During this time he organized a church in Smithfield, and resuscitated a decayed one at Greenwich, and another at South Kingston. In Greenwich his labors were attended by a considerable revival of religion. There was no period of his ministry to which he oftener referred, or which he seemed to remember with more satisfaction, than the nine years passed in Rhode Island.

In 1820, through the influence of Dr. Pearson, who, meanwhile, had left Andover, and taken up his residence at Harvard, Mr. Waldo was invited to supply the pulpit in the last-mentioned place; and he did supply it—I know not exactly how long, but I believe for several months. During part of this time he was a boarder in Dr. Pearson's family, and in his daily intercourse with him found a source of rich enjoyment and improvement. On leaving Harvard, he returned to Rhode Island for a short time, and then directed his course to Connecticut. While he was making this journey, the uncertainty of his prospects, in connection with his standing domestic trial, occasioned him a temporary depression of mind; but the Saviour's direction to "take no thought for the morrow" came to him with an inspiriting influence, and his confidence in his heavenly Father's care was at once renewed, and he went on his way rejoicing. After preaching for a few weeks for his nephew at Griswold, who was temporarily disabled by means of an injury, he was invited to preach in the neighboring parish of Exeter, then vacant; and having served them in this way, without any definite or permanent arrangement, for a year, he received a call, in 1823, to become their pastor, upon a salary

of three hundred dollars. This call he accepted, and he found here, in many respects, a pleasant home. His labors were not only acceptable, but were attended with decisive tokens of spiritual blessing. He continued in this relation for twelve years, and then resigned his charge, because the parish, owing to various causes, had become so much reduced as to be unable to continue even the small salary they had pledged to him.

On leaving Exeter he supplied the pulpit in Hanover, a parish of Lisbon, for about four months, and then transferred his residence to this State, in consequence of the removal hither of one of his sons. Shortly after his arrival here, in 1835, he accepted an invitation to preach for a year at Sodus Ridge; and, having fulfilled that engagement, he returned to Connecticut, and for three or four months supplied the pulpit in Eastbury, a parish of Glastenbury. He then came back to this State, where he ever afterward made his home. For two years he officiated as a supply in Rose Valley, near Clyde; after which he preached three months at Wolcott, Wayne county; then three months at South Butler, in the same county; and at a later period still, was stationed as a missionary for three years at Victory. On the completion of this latter engagement, in 1846, he went to Geddes to live in the family of his son, and remained there till 1856, when they removed to this city, where he has spent the residue of his days. During this period he has supplied different pulpits, sometimes for months in succession; and I believe always to much acceptance. The last pulpit he supplied continuously for any length of time was that at Manlius, and the last sermon he ever preached was at Jordan, since he entered his hundred and second year.

Perhaps the most memorable event in Mr. Waldo's history was his being chosen Chaplain to Congress for the years 1856 and 1857, when he was ninety-four and ninety-five years of age; this honorable position having been secured to him chiefly through the influence of one of the members from this city,* seconded by another member from this neighborhood,† both of whom he held in the highest esteem, and whose kind offices he always delighted to acknowledge. The duties of this important station he discharged to general acceptance; and the opportunities which this appointment secured to him for wide and varied observation, for forming an acquaintance with many illustrious characters, and listening to the congressional debates, in which he recognized the gathering of the cloud which has since been discharging upon us its fiery contents, marked this as perhaps the most interesting epoch of his wonderfully protracted life.

The day that completed his hundredth year came and found him with a degree of vigor of both body and mind that made him

* Hon. A. P. Granger. † Hon. R. B. Morgan.

one of the wonders of the world. It was impossible that, in a community like this, such an occasion should be overlooked; and hence we heard of the appropriate exercises and grateful offerings by which you signalized it. And we too (I refer especially to my own congregation) were privileged to see the face and hear the voice of the venerable old man on the Sabbath immediately following your own jubilant demonstrations; and I can truly say that his wise and seasonable utterances well rewarded the most fixed and reverent attention. The services of that Sabbath morning we still hold in fresh and grateful remembrance.

Since the period now referred to, Mr. Waldo has, for the most part, enjoyed comfortable health, the only very perceptible change until within a short time having been the gradual failure of his vision. His mind seemed to operate with a freedom little if at all diminished; his affections retained all their generous warmth; and his susceptibility to social enjoyment as well as his power of ministering to the gratification of his friends, were apparently just as they had been in other days. A few weeks since, the startling intelligence went abroad that, by a misstep, as he was leaving his chamber, he had been precipitated partly down a flight of stairs, and had sustained an injury which it was feared imperiled his life. I saw him a few days after this casualty, and when the hopes of his friends concerning him had begun to rise, but the change which had passed upon him was so marked that I could not repress my apprehensions of a fatal issue. Hence, I was not disappointed when I heard of the signs of approaching death; nor when I heard that death had actually done its work; and the calm and trusting and grateful spirit which he breathed in my last interview with him, taken in connection with his long life, which was fragrant with love to God and man, and was one continued expression of faith in the Redeemer, constitute all the evidence that could be desired that his hundred years' training on earth had fitted him for a higher, glorious life, not measured by centuries, but absolutely eternal.

It is proper that I should say something of what Mr. Waldo was, as well as of what he experienced and what he did; and yet, in doing this, I can not forget that I am speaking to those among whom he has long had his home, and many of whom, no doubt, have been in habits of much more frequent intercourse with him than I have myself been. Nevertheless, I am at no loss in respect to any of his characteristics; and however familiar you may be with them, I can not doubt that it will be a grateful exercise of your thoughts to call them up in more impressive remembrance in connection with these funeral solemnities.

Mr. Waldo was eminently favored in his physical constitution. With a vigorous and symmetrical frame, he combined a countenance expressive at once of a thoughtful and well-balanced mind and a benevolent and genial spirit. When I first saw him

(which was in the winter of 1810–11), I was struck with his personal appearance as being much more than ordinarily attractive; and though age could not fail to make its impression upon him, it did little more than throw an air of venerableness around his naturally fine organization. His manners were simple and natural, and betokened at once consideration and kindness.

And all and more than all that was shadowed forth in his exterior assumed a substantial form in his character and life. The cast of his intellect was rather sober than brilliant, rather sure than adventurous. He was at home in the domain of common sense and sound judgment, far more than in the regions of fancy or amidst the subtleties of metaphysics. He had a vein of keen wit, which he used always in a quiet and unostentatious way, sometimes for the amusement of his friends, sometimes for rebuking folly, or impertinence, or vice, and sometimes for silencing an adversary. He had an uncommonly retentive memory—scarcely any thing of importance had ever been deposited in it that did not remain there always. In the annual visits which he has paid me since he passed his ninetieth year, I have been deeply impressed by the fact that books which he had read, and even minute details which had been communicated to him, while he was with me one year, seemed perfectly fresh in his memory the next. A habit which he formed early in life of committing to paper what seemed to him the gems of thought in the various authors he read, was doubtless an important auxiliary to his memory; while it gave him ready command of these accumulated treasures in his ordinary intercourse.

Mr. Waldo was constituted with great equanimity and cheerfulness as well as great kindliness of temper; and these qualities were sanctified and elevated by a living Christianity. In all my intercourse with him, I never saw in him the least sign of depression or discontent. Though he was undergoing a constant baptism in the cloud, from one of the severest domestic calamities, he always spoke of it with an air of calm and trusting, and even cheerful submission. He possessed a spirit of enlarged benevolence—a spirit that delighted in the happiness of all around him, and disposed him to contribute to the happiness of all whom his influence could reach. As to ample pecuniary means, he never possessed them; but, as a large heart is always inventive, he was never at a loss for opportunities of doing good, and was never slow to avail himself of them. He was especially interested in the well-being of the young; he always had a word in season to drop upon the ear of a youth, in whom he recognized any signs of wandering; and no doubt many have been restrained, and many others reclaimed, by his timely counsels and admonitions. He was candid and lenient in his judgment of others, and had no overweening estimate of himself. Those who have seen him on occasions of great public interest, since he has become an object of curiosity

on account of his wonderful age, have remarked the utter absence of every thing like self-glorying, and the kindly and even deferential consideration with which he has demeaned himself toward those who were, by half a century, his juniors.

He was happily constituted to render himself at once attractive and edifying in social life. His well-stored mind, his good humor, often discovering itself in an amusing or a pithy anecdote, his calm and dignified yet winning manner, and his readiness to converse at proper times on subjects of the deepest interest, were sure to render him welcome to every well-disposed and intelligent circle. And I may add, that he was even more distinguished in epistolary correspondence than in conversation—there was a certain pith and point, a naturalness of thought and sententiousness of expression, that gave a charm to his letters that was quite irresistible. He often occupied himself in writing to young men; and if those letters could be collected, I doubt not that they would be found to contain a rare fund of both wit and wisdom.

As a preacher, he was at once interesting and instructive. Without ever troubling himself much with the metaphysics of theology, he embraced the system commonly called evangelical, in its scriptural simplicity, never attempting to be wise above what is written. His sermons, if I mistake not, were more than ordinarily practical, in the sense of having a direct bearing upon the life. They contained much vigorous and well-matured thought, and were written in a correct, terse, and luminous style. His manner was at the greatest remove from any attempt to be eloquent—indeed, he had no patience with any departure from simplicity in the pulpit—but there was a self-possessed and dignified earnestness that gave no inconsiderable effect to his utterances and secured the attention of his hearers to the last. A considerable number of his discourses had been rendered so familiar to him by repetition that, after his sight had become so imperfect that he was unable to read his manuscript in the pulpit, he could still deliver himself with great freedom and acceptableness; and if his memory was ever at fault, his ready power of extemporizing prevented all embarrassment.

As a pastor, I do not remember to have ever heard him spoken of; but with so much good sense, and benevolence, and power of adaptation, and devotion to his Master's cause, as he possessed, I can not doubt that he shone peculiarly in that relation. In every place in which he has labored for any considerable time I believe you will find traditions of, if not living witnesses to, the prudence, fidelity, and tenderness with which he demeaned himself toward those of whom he had the spiritual oversight.

Had Mr. Waldo died half a century ago, he would have closed [illegible]eful life and left an honored name; but he would not have [illegible]that enduring record in the history of the church which his [illegible]pers have secured to him. That which makes him pre-

eminent among the ministry of the age, is the fact that he has not only much more than tripled the average life of man, but has continued to exercise his ministry during nearly the whole of this period, and at the age of more than a hundred years has been an edifying and acceptable preacher. A few other ministers in this country have lived to complete their century; but if any one has ever reached this age, with intellectual faculties so little impaired, with a heart so warm and genial, with such keen relish for social enjoyment, and such just appreciation of characters and events, and such ability to interest by his public ministrations, I confess the case has never come within my knowledge. It is in this respect that Mr. Waldo stands nearly, if not quite, by himself, in the history of the church.

No man, I venture to say, in this community, or in any community, contemplated the present perilous condition of our country with deeper concern than Father Waldo. By his labors and sufferings he had helped to purchase this goodly inheritance of free institutions; and it was impossible that he should see it thus assailed and imperiled without having his keenest sensibilities called into exercise. He noted carefully every thing pertaining to the progress of the war, and formed an intelligent estimate of the various agencies which had been put in requisition. But he had the fullest confidence that our cause is a righteous one, and that it will ultimately succeed; and in its success he delighted to think would be involved the overthrow of what he regarded the most gigantic of our national evils,—the institution of slavery. The day of our final triumph he did not expect to see—it was enough for him to feel assured that that day would come—and the thought of it made him well nigh jubilant, even though it must have been associated with thoughts of his own grave. It is a coïncidence not to be overlooked that the day that witnesses to his funeral solemnities should find here, in the midst of you, two of the heroic dead, who have been brought from the battle-field, on their way to their final resting-places; and that one of these, who has just fallen, should, for the last two days, have been lying in the dwelling nearest to that in which this venerable relic of the Revolution was also lying in his grave-clothes.

In recording the death of this remarkable man, we record the death of the oldest graduate of Yale College; of the oldest minister, so far as is known, in the United States; of one of the very last of those who were actively engaged in the scenes of our Revolution. His death seems to have broken a cord by which the past was bound to the present. There remaineth not another such man to die. Centuries may pass away before the world shall look upon his like again.

And now what remains, my friends, but that we gather up the lessons—lessons of wisdom, of admonition, of [redacted] of hope—which this hour so impressively teaches? [redacted] mourners,

bowed under the loss of a beloved and honored relative; the surviving children, who, though they are themselves advanced in life, have never until now been without the guidance of a father's pure example; especially the granddaughter, who has been for many years as a loving angel about his path, and toward whom his heart was always going forth in grateful acknowledgments and kind expressions—let all who recognize in this event the sundering of any of the ties of kindred, see to it that their sorrow is duly qualified with thankfulness—for who more privileged than themselves, in respect either to the exalted character of a departed friend or the long continuance of his life? Let those of us who bear the same high relation to the church, as ambassadors for Christ, which he held so long, accept with docility the teachings both of his life and of his death; and, by patient continuance in the duties of our calling, get ready to follow him in his upward track. Let those whom age has already brought within sight of the grave, pause in an attitude of earnest inquiry and solemn thought in respect to the scenes which are so quickly to open upon them; and let this survivor of a century speak to them, through the silence of his coffin, of the paramount importance of being girded for the final summons. Let those who have been accustomed to meet this revered man in the more general relations of society; those who have accounted it a privilege sometimes to visit him at his dwelling and listen to his words of wisdom and kindness; those who have been used to see his face, and often hear his voice, amidst the services of the sanctuary; in short, let this entire community, in the midst of which his last years have been spent, bear in mind that they have to account for the privilege of having had not only a prophet but a patriarch among them. May the mantle of Elijah rest upon many Elishas. And while the fathers die, let us be sustained by the reflection that a Greater than they liveth, and is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

SERMON XIX.

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THE ANGER OF JESUS.

"AND when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand."—MARK 3: 5.

WE have, in some recent discourses, turned our view to the tender side of our Lord's character. To-day we shall view him in some of his severer moods. It is manifestly of the highest import-

ance that we should know him just as he is; for "this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Our life in Christ depends upon our knowing him in the completeness of his character—a just and discriminating judge, as well as a pitying Redeemer. His moral temper is not all compassion; that would be weakness. He is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," as well as the "Lamb of God." There is no other such example as he of a man in whom "mercy and truth have met together," and "righteousness and peace have kissed each other," in perfect proportion and harmony,

Our text is, I believe, the only passage in the four histories we have of him, in which any one of the Evangelists has applied to him the term *anger*. It is not, however, the only one in which he exhibits the *feeling* of anger. We see his mind on a number of occasions more or less excited by that which produced displeasure, and called forth rebuke. Toward his friends, not excepting his mother, there was sometimes a tone of severity. To those whom he knew to be enemies, harboring malice, and in all his discourses and acts seeking occasion for complaints against *him*, he at times used severe language. There is a coming day, which will be signalized in the annals of the universe as "the great day of his wrath."

I. I shall first review some of those circumstances and occasions in which the Lord Jesus appears to have had his anger excited.

The occasion of it in the instance here recorded by Mark, was a pertinacious purpose on the part of the Scribes and Pharisees to find in his Sabbath-day miracles a ground of accusation. In lately attending the Passover at Jerusalem, he had, on the Sabbath, healed, by the Pool of Bethesda, a cripple who had borne his infirmity thirty-eight years. The act had been seized upon as a violation of what the Pharisees held to be the sanctity of the day; it being a rule of their casuistry that to *work a cure* was a work disallowed by the Sabbatic law; the only thing allowed was the *alleviation* of distress. When it was known that Jesus had wrought a work of healing, there was talk among them of having him arrested. They would even have inflicted on him the death penalty, as a Sabbath-breaker. Yet they took, at that time, no active measures against him. When the festival was over, and he started with his disciples and others for Galilee, it would seem that the Pharisees sent a deputation along, as a sort of secret detective force, to watch his words and movements still. On the very next Sabbath, as they pursued their journey toward Galilee, another occasion for their censures was furnished by that act of the disciples in the field of grain—an act which their Master would not condemn. Arriving at Capernaum, these Jerusalem spies were still about him. The coming of the Sabbath brought another appeal to his healing power. A man in the sy[redacted] a

withered hand. Jesus saw it, and he saw likewise that he was watched with reference to it. This had no effect to hold him back. Knowing their thoughts, that they were waiting to see whether he would work such a miracle; knowing that they desired it, not for the benevolent reason that it would relieve an unfortunate man, but for the malicious reason that they could make a crime of the act—he, fearless of their designs, and calmly fixed in his better purpose, said to the man of the withered hand, "Rise up and stand forth in the midst." This being done, he said to the men before him, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life or to destroy it?" *He* was acting the part of a Saviour; they, by their opposition, were acting the part of destroyers. Convicted by his questioning, they made no reply, but silently nourished their malevolent purpose. Our Lord, grieved by their hardness of heart, and showing indignation in his looks, bade the unfortunate cripple stretch forth his hand, which was immediately done.

This incident belongs to about the middle of his public life. It was just after his second passover, and before his calling of the twelve. I pass some other occasions, to notice how, two years later, while spending the passover week—the last week of his life —about the Temple, his spirit was again stirred up, and still more profoundly, by the evil purposes and dark hypocrisy of his enemies

On the second day of the week, he entered Jerusalem from Bethany, amid the acclamations of the multitude. Approaching the Temple, he was greeted with the hosannas of the children, who were quick to echo the popular shouts they heard. On the same day, as they were brought to him, he healed a number of persons, blind and lame.

The next day, in walking in from Bethany in the morning, he first let fall those significant words, under which a fruitless fig-tree was withered. This betokened what he was about to say and do in his deeper displeasure toward worse offenders. Entering those courts of the Temple which were occupied by the money-changers, he not only complained of their having been converted into a den of thieves, but he used a whip, from which the astonished brokers fled. This was a high-handed measure, and it was a high hand that made use of it. The chief priests and members of the Sanhedrim, of course, regarded it as an outrage; and on the following day, as he taught the people, they boldly challenged the authority by which he did these things. Their questions brought him face to face with the authority which was represented in them; and during this, the fourth day of the week, we see him standing before them as one who knew himself their master, while preparing himself and them for the last act of their revenge.

He asked them about the baptism of John, whether it was from Heaven or from men; implying that if Heaven had approved that,

it had approved him. He told them the story of the two sons, of whom the one said, "I go, sir," and went not—a story whose moral they had no trouble to discern. He followed that with the parable of the wicked husbandmen, beating and killing their lord's servants, and at last his son. Then came the parable of the marriage, which they that were first bidden would not attend. Each illustration added something to the exasperated feeling of the men whose conduct and characters he was laying bare. Each helped them to forget their animosities toward one another, and to turn upon him the whole force of their combined resentments. With a harmony of malicious plan, each party tried its skill in turn to entangle him in the snares of the law. Pharisees and Herodians made common cause in the contest. With bland compliment, and professions of faith in him as a teacher of the way of God in truth, they did their best to draw from him the word that should prove him disloyal to Cæsar, or friendly to Cæsar, they cared not which. If disloyal, the Herodians would report him to the Roman authorities. If friendly, the Pharisees would catch at that, and report him to the Jews as one who would fasten the Roman yoke upon their neck instead of breaking it. The Sadducees, for their part, tried him with the resurrection puzzle. He penetrated every plot. He slipped through all their snares. He answered questions, and proposed questions, till they gave up the contest. Then he turned upon them as a lion roused by their assaults. First, he rebuked them indirectly by his cautions to the people. "Beware," said he, "of the Scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the market-places, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts. . . . The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not. For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." Then, making a more direct charge, he turned his address to the men whose hypocritical robes he was rending. It was the last sermon they would hear from him. It was the last he would preach before pouring out his saddest tears, and then his blood, for an incorrigible nation. Now he overwhelmed them with the terribleness of his words. He called them hypocrites. He called them fools. He called them blind. He called them serpents and vipers. He called them children of hell. He told them plainly that their prayers were sheer pretence. He charged them with the cupidity that devoured widows' houses. He held them up as the worthy sons of those who had shed the blood of the prophets. He declared that they would neither come into the kingdom of God nor suffer others to come in. He compared them to whited sepulchers, in appearance fair and clean, but full of all corruption inwardly. He repeated, at

the head of each new charge, the phrase, "Woe unto you!" And, telling them finally what they were about to do, and bidding them go on and fill up the measure of their guilt, he solemnly and mournfully uttered his farewell, saying, as he closed the interview, and was about to retire, "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

In walking away from the Temple, he called the attention of the disciples to its massive stones and beauty, so soon to become a ruin. And on his way to Bethany, as he left the scene of the day's excitements to pass one more night under the quiet roof of friendship, he more calmly discoursed to the few that were with him, about the great events and sorrows to come after his death. The sun did not go down upon his wrath.

During this last week at the Temple, and especially on the last day, we see our Lord in a state of intense moral excitement. The anger which at Capernaum had merely shown itself in his looks, here broke out in terms of sharp denunciation. We do not need to be told in this case that feelings of anger had place in his bosom. When the thunders are talking, we know there is lightning in the cloud.

II. We proceed to consider next the qualities of this anger. It is important that we fall into no error with respect to the real nature of the excitement of mind which our Lord experienced. So influential an example as his, on this point especially, needs to be well understood. The supposition of any thing ill-tempered, any thing unreasonable, any thing revengeful and malignant, in his passion, is quite excluded by what the Spirit of truth has said of him, as one "who knew no sin," though "tempted in all points like as we are."

There is a clause in the text, which seems to have been put in for the special purpose of preventing any misconception in so important a matter. "When he had looked round about on them with anger, *being grieved for the hardness of their hearts*, he saith unto the man," etc. His anger was grief awakened by what he saw of evil in them. It had no root in *self*. It was not the anger of personal resentment and wounded pride. It was not a hate which would have found its gratification in the heaping of injury or of dishonor upon them. It was a moral emotion excited by its proper cause; the spontaneous and unavoidable displeasure of a holy mind, full of sorrow for the unfortunate, in the presence of minds swayed by prejudice and evil passion, that were plotting against its wisdom, and aiming to counteract the outworkings of its benevolence. Our Lord saw men before him whose natural humanity was swallowed up in the desire of finding some foothold for a judicial proceeding against him. Their only pleasure at seeing a withered hand made whole, was the malicious pleasure of

having something on which to base a charge. They were glad of the miracle, but only for the reason that they could use it as a weapon against the miracle-worker. This insensibility on the one hand to a poor man's affliction, and this malevolent delight on the other, were a double evidence of moral hardness. What a contrast to his own pure compassion! To see such a want of sympathy with misfortune, and with the mercy that sought to remove it, deeply and painfully grieved him.

His anger at Jerusalem was of the same nature. The same hardness of heart there confronted him, except that it had grown harder in its continuance, and had now advanced to the degree of being ready, through treachery and falsehood, to put him to death. Men were there who represented the highest authority and sanctity of the Church of God, but who, in their blind worldliness, had neither the love of God, nor any proper knowledge of God. They prayed, to be seen of men. They made a show of great scrupulousness in paying tithes of insignificant herbs, while he knew them to be under the power of a covetousness that showed no pity to the poor. Their religious zeal, without the elements of faith and charity, had sunk to a low zeal for the dogmas and traditions on which their position and influence in society rested. Their furious proselyting was all to draw men to themselves, not to convert men to the truth. Their opposition to Christ showed a determination to shut out from the church the light which he had come to put into it. Instead of giving their candid attention to his miracles, so full of compassion and power; to his discourses, so full of heavenly instruction; to his life, so conformed to the law of God—they were only hunting occasions against him, and turning all his works and words into the arguments their malice demanded for his destruction. He knew how the Sanhedrim had, for more than two months, since the Feast of Dedication, been determined upon his death; and how that purpose, now ripe for execution, had closed their minds to all the evidences that might have satisfied them of his innocence, and of his divinely-approved mission. And now, as he thought of what they were doing, and of the dreadful guilt they were contracting; as he thought of their moral blindness, rushing on to the greatest of crimes as if they were doing God service; as he thought of himself, so misunderstood, so misrepresented; as he thought of his followers, so soon to be scattered; as he thought of the multitudes who needed the further and fuller light of his ministry, now to be left as sheep without a shepherd—as these and other thoughts pressed upon him, the weight of grief which came with them was insupportable. A holy indignation, blending with profoundest sorrow, overwhelmed him.

We see in the narrative, that his anger had the virtuous characteristic of being transient. It did not rest in his bosom, as did that of his enemies in theirs. On their side anger had become hatred, and wrath was now running to rage. On his side there

capital offense; that was so easily moved to jealousy by symptoms of idolatry; whose word in the mouth of the prophets was so often a sharp sword; who sent famine and pestilence and war upon the Jews; and who, by the arm of his righteous providence, has broken in pieces like a potter's vessel so many a nation that would not serve him.

Or, if the miracles of Jesus, so divinely majestic and full of conscious power, should be able to sustain our faith in him as one claiming divinity, we might fall into the error of supposing that God is changeable, and that in taking a human nature he has come to look upon our moral frailties, as it were, with new eyes. I am not sure that we wholly escape this error, even with those facts before us, to which our attention in this discourse is drawn. We look so much at the human side of our Lord's character, and so habitually think of him as *one* in nature and sympathy with *us*, that our *reverence* for him is lowered. Shall we fear that infant on Mary's bosom? Shall we fear that quiet, good-natured boy? Shall we fear a plain, peaceable carpenter of a country village? Shall we fear him who professed, in his first public discourse, to have been anointed to preach the gospel to the poor—sent to heal the broken-hearted—sent to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, and to preach the Lord's *year of grace*—and whose beneficent ministry so answered to the terms of this commission? Shall we fear one who took the hardships of life so patiently, and the wrongs of the world so meekly and forgivingly? Shall we fear the sufferer of Gethsemane and Calvary? And if all this be a manifestation of GOD, have we any thing to fear from *him?* Thus we slide into an error of feeling, if not of faith. With an immutable God in our creed, we lose him in our emotions. The meekness, gentleness, kindness, and patience of Christ, make upon our feeling their impression; while we become well-nigh insensible to the fact that these milder traits were and are united with all the attributes in which God was ever revealed. We part with not a little of the reverence produced by our thoughts of the God of the Old Testament.

The glimpses we get in the gospel of our Lord's severe and just indignation ought to correct this irreverential tendency of the mind. A single flash of the lightning tells of the formidable element that is lodged in the bosom of the cloud; and the few flashes that broke out from his serene bosom against wicked men, whom he had not yet come to judge, should serve to satisfy us, not only that in him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead, but that now, as really as before the incarnation, "our God is a consuming fire." He is a God that changes not.

It is worthy of special note here, that Christ himself, in his last discourse at the Temple, *assumed to be* the one who had held the *Jewish* nation under their long trial, and who was now holding

them to their accountability. For he said to Jerusalem, "How often would *I* have gathered thy children together." It was no other than He who had sought through so many centuries, and by the ministry of so many a prophet and priest, to unite them in his covenant. It was He who had, like a shepherd, ruled them, and fed them, and kept them. And now that He was a shepherd disowned, a ruler repudiated, he talked of consequences in the Old Testament style of offended goodness and dishonored sovereignty: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!" He would come without much delay for the righteous judgment of the nation rejecting him.

3. We may, again, discover in our Lord's anger, a foreshadowing of the wrath that will overwhelm the wicked in the great day of final justice.

There is a time for every purpose. There was a time, "that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared;" when "according to his mercy he saved us;" when he "sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world;" when the motive was pity, and the mission one of mercy. There is a time for this pity to be proclaimed, and for the church to fulfill her mission in carrying through the world the offer of this salvation. There is a day of privilege for all sinners—

> "A day of grace, when mortals may
> Secure the blessings of the day."

There is also a day appointed of God, when he will "judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." And when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of his glory in a judicial character—when he shall appear for the express purpose of judgment—he has fully authorized the expectation that his justice toward the wicked will be manifested in great severity.

According to his own account of the scene, he will say to those upon his left hand, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." Other inspired representations of the scene give us pictures of dismay, of terror, of wailing, of tribulation and anguish, unequaled by any other description ever written. We have all the terrible imagery of a battle-field on which God is the conqueror, and from which his enemies, routed, scattered, hopeless, fly in all directions in search of sheltering hills, which are nowhere to be found, to hide them from his face. It is to be the *great day of his wrath*, when the cry will be heard: *Who is able to stand?* The descriptions that we have of the joys and triumphs of the redeemed; of the beauty, brightness, and bliss of heaven; of Messiah's grand entry into his kingdom, with banner, and song, and thanksgiving—these descriptions are not more vivid and glorious, than those of the overthrow and despair of the unbelieving are vivid and awful. Can any thing surpass that image of a wine-press, in which the

wicked are the grapes trodden upon in all the "fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God?" But he who treads the wine-press is the once meek and merciful Jesus.

Does it seem to you impossible that so mild a nature can exhibit itself in such severity? Bear the fact in mind, that mild natures, allied to the interests of justice, never fail to be severe executioners when their patience has been carried to the extreme that the case admits, and the sentiment of justice awakes to action. As their very forbearance serves to swell the wrong that is done on the other side, and to inculpate the offender as one who has not only offended against duty, but has continued to offend against mercy—that forbearance must in the end evoke a more aggravated punishment. Bear it also in mind, that men are guilty of the evil they cause in others, and that a train of pernicious influence runs on from every unsanctified life across the future; so that the evil, not only which every sinner has done, but all the mischiefs in the moral system which have been the result of his example, from the time of his death to the day of judgment, will come in to stir the indignation of a Saviour who has worked against that evil, and has sought to prevent it by his very tears and blood. With these facts in mind; and considering how the holiness of the Redeemer flashed out at times, in anger, during his life of love and sorrow; we shall not be tempted to discredit any of the representations the Bible gives of his overwhelming indignation in the last awful day.

4. And so I find in my subject a motive, which I may use with you in this day of his goodness, to constrain you to flee to him for refuge. It has been with the design to save men, that he has revealed so much as he has of the holy anger excited in him by the sins of men. With the same benevolent design do his ministers exhibit to you the just and severe, as well as the merciful and sympathetic, side of his character. You can not know him too well. You *must* know him as he is—JUST, and HAVING SALVATION—to be made savingly wise. "Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men." We fully believe there is "wrath to come;" and that it will burst, even from the Saviour's tender breast, in a flame that will be to all who obey not the gospel, a fire consuming and unquenchable.

There is now forgiveness with him. Now "the vilest sinner may return." The arms of love, the doors of hope, the negotiations of peace, are open. Should any of you fail to come in through the open doors, and to find rest and peace in his extended arms, you will in a coming day be angry with yourselves. Your indignation, as well as his, will be provoked. Can one forgive his own mistakes, amid such teachings relative to the wisdom of life as we have from the great Prophet of mankind? Can one fail to reproach his own folly, who has never learned enough in life to know how "the goodness of God leadeth to repentance," and on

whose worldly mind through life a Saviour's love has made no effectual impression? If we would not come under this self-reproach, and under the just anger of a God forsaken, and a Saviour unaccepted, let our hearts to-day be open to the truth that may enlighten, to the love that will forgive. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

SERMON XX.

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THE DEFECTION OF DEMAS.

"DEMAS hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica."—2 TIMOTHY 4: 10 (part).

IN only two other passages of Scripture, and they briefer even than this, do we find mention of Demas. Yet enough is said to give us a key to his character; and he seems better known, and is oftener referred to by way of warning in the writings and speeches of Christian men, than are many whose lives we have more in detail. Each reader combines, with these brief hints, such knowledge as he may have of the times, places, circumstances, in which Demas lived, and so forms for himself some biography of the man.

Let us take openly and avowedly the cause which so many have half-consciously pursued, with the expressed and implied facts concerning Demas, and see what lessons his life and character furnish for our instruction. This, the more recent histories of the life and times of the apostles give us every facility for doing.*

The first that we hear of him is in Paul's Epistle to the Colossians and that to Philemon, both written during the apostle's first imprisonment at Rome, probably in the year of our Lord sixty-two.

In each of these letters, Paul sends Christian salutations from Demas, as among the personal friends who were faithful and serviceable to him in his imprisonment. He is named in the fraternal bond with Mark, Luke the beloved physician, and others whom the apostle takes manifest pleasure in commending as his fellow-laborers, his fellow-helpers in the truth. We do not won-

* See, especially, CONYBARE and HOWSON'S *Life and Epistles of Paul*. Their chronology has been mainly followed in this discourse.

der at Paul's affectionateness of esteem, at a time when friends were few and sorely needed, not merely for his own comfort, but for that which lay far nearer to his heart—the advancement of Christ's infant church.

A year after writing these salutations, and after two years' imprisonment at Rome—an imprisonment, however, which does not prevent such writing and preaching as a man may do with one arm chained to that of a military guard; writing and preaching so effectual, too, as to make converts even in the imperial palace—Paul is acquitted of the false charges urged against him; goes to Macedonia, thence to the province of Asia; thence, perhaps, to Spain; returns to Ephesus and Nicopolis; writes his first pastoral letter to Timothy and that to Titus; and in the spring of the year sixty-eight is again in a Roman prison. But he is not now, as before, in comparative comfort, permitted to see his friends in his hired apartments, and to preach Christ crucified to all who would hear. He is in closest confinement, under imperial guard; if tradition speaks truly, shut in that dark, damp, rock-hewn cell—the Mamertine prison. In the power of his own and his Lord's enemies, practically learning the change for the worse which six years more of despotic power and lust have wrought in Nero's savage heart, he yet finds means to write this last and most touching of all his letters—the second to Timothy. Even amid the raptures of joyful assurance that he shall soon see his Lord, and wear the martyr's crown which he knows is laid up for him, the apostle, forsaken of all his summer friends, longs to see once more his dearly beloved son in the faith, that his own spirit may be cheered by the steadfast courage of his young successor, and that he may personally communicate his last instructions to one on whom such weighty responsibilities have come and are soon to press still more heavily.

Under these circumstances it is, that we hear again of Demas.

"Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me," Paul says to Timothy, "for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica." He adds: "Crescens has gone to Galatia; Titus, unto Dalmatia; only Luke is with me." Crescens and Titus had gone, no doubt, in the service of the church, bearing messages for Paul and fulfilling missions from which he was personally debarred.

But not so with Demas. We are not left even to hope that his errand to Thessalonica may have been for the edification of the church in that city, as Timothy had once been sent there by Paul, "to establish them and to comfort them concerning their faith." He says expressly, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."

And here is one of the chief lessons for us that this account of Demas teaches.

The love of this present world—what evil it has wrought, is working still! The love of this present world—not only keeping

many a soul from coming to Christ, but alluring back to its sordid pursuits and pleasures not a few who thought that they had for ever renounced them.

The love of this present world—well do the apostles so explicitly and earnestly warn us against it. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

It would be interesting and instructive could we know the specific—as we have here the general—cause of Demas's defection. But we are not told, and can only guess, in which of its many forms this present world presented itself so alluringly as to entice him away from the Christian cause.

It will do us no harm—if we bear in mind that they are only suppositions—to suppose some of the aspects which this tempting principle may have assumed in his case—as it has so often and so fatally in others.

It may have been, THE DESIRE OF WEALTH, with its ease and comforts.

Thus, we know, it led away many of Christ's hearers. They had read, and heard in the synagogues, of the Messiah's glorious coming and kingdom, and had learned from the prevalent spirit of the times, to regard it as the restoration of the temporal dominion to Israel—the making "her children princes in all the earth"—princes, not in David's sublime spiritual meaning, but in the low, secular import of the term consonant with their material views of God's word and plan. When they learned the actual truth of the matter, they were wanting.

You remember Christ's rebuke to a company of this sort: "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles"—proofs of my divine character and mission—"but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth; but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you." A very different gift from that which they were seeking!

And when that enthusiast came to him with the voluntary offer: "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," how suddenly his ardor cooled at our Saviour's words: "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."

Christ's doctrine of self-denial in the use of property—requiring that it be largely devoted to the good of others, and not to self-gratification—was every where one of the most repellent features of his system, driving away many of his nominal adherents. So

You remember also the disturbance caused at P
healing of the damsel possessed with a spirit of di
rage that her cure excited in the hearts of her maste
could hope for no further gains from exhibiting her
stitious and curious.

It was from this same Philippi that Paul and Silas
been released from prison, in the year fifty-two, ma
to Thessalonica, where Demas is supposed to have
position which has in its favor, tradition, and the fact
thither on forsaking Paul. Immediately on reachin
apostle entered the synagogue, and for three success
argued with Jews and proselytes out of the Jewish S
cerning Jesus, the suffering, risen, and glorified Messi
specially upon the glories of his kingdom, to be re
faithful at his second coming. The young Demas ma
these thrilling appeals and arguments, enforced not
apostle's natural enthusiasm, but by the evidence of h
treatment for Christ's sake at Philippi; and in the ard
ed conscience, convinced reason, and glowing hope,
espoused a cause, which, though now depressed, was
Christ's personal reäppearance—according to the pre
of the Thessalonians—to be lifted from the dust to th
could well adhere to his profession so long as Paul w
the new faith here and there with at least partial
while nothing seemed to forbid the early realization
tic hopes. But it was quite another thing, when, as
by, "the second coming" seemed further off than ev
cuting hostility of the government was still more cr
against this hated sect; and Paul, in his closely guar
was awaiting certain martyrdom.

That was a discouraging time for such as were wal

terprise? Why follow the fortunes of this enthusiast, so soon to die, like his Master before him, and to leave me alone, friendless and aimless, too old to begin life anew, and counted by my friends as little better than a madman? . . . I may as well go back to Thessalonica, accumulate property, and with that help this cause—if it bids fair ever to succeed—help it far more effectually than I can here."

And so he went, like many another—having loved this present world—and we hear no more of Demas. He escaped the "mortification" of seeing his friend martyred for the truth of Christ, and of being sneered at as a visionary. He doubtless avoided the sufferings of poverty, persecution, and the rest, that made up the experience of Christ's faithful ones. Perhaps he made a fortune, and enjoyed it at his ease. Very likely. What he lost, we shall know hereafter.

Again, it may be that this love of the world, in the mind of Demas, took the form of DESIRE OF POWER OR STATION.

Demas may have been something of a politician, in his way. They had a fashion in those days of giving men significant names, and changing them sometimes according to circumstances. Possibly it was so in this case; for Demas is a Greek name, meaning "popular," "the people's man," "a favorer of the masses." Possibly the name was significantly appropriate, indicating a love of popularity, power, and office, that may have characterized him at home, that may have had much to do with his allying himself to Paul as a preacher of Messiah's coming kingdom.

If this was Demas's characteristic, Satan very well knew when to appeal to it; and he would not fail to cause it to return in full power upon the wavering mind of Demas, when Paul, instead of a place next the throne, occupied a dungeon, which he was to exchange only for the block of the executioner. Under the mastery of this newly-revived passion, he may have returned to Thessalonica, to take part in some political movement that promised him promotion. There is the more ground for this supposition, from the fact that Thessalonica was a free city, self-governed as to its internal affairs, having no Roman garrison, the civil and magesterial authority in the hands of the people's assembly. According to cotemporaneous history, it was a very "paradise of demagogues." We might infer as much from some of Paul's exhortations in his letters to the Christians there, as to warning the unruly, being no idlers, and the like; as also from the characteristic doings of some of them. You remember the mob of the idle and disorderly which they raised against Paul and Silas; their assault upon the house of Jason, the friend with whom the apostles had been lodging; their dragging Jason himself before the assembly, their charging him and his friends with sedition, their compelling him to give security, and driving Paul and Silas from the city.

Perhaps Demas became a very great man in such a community, a leader of one of the influential "parties" that distracted and con-

rupted the people by their sophistries, and sacrificed all moral principle for power. Possibly—for such things were sometimes done in days long gone by—possibly, for the sake of promotion, he abjured every principle of freedom, justice, truth and righteousness, which he had learned and mantained as a member of the Christian Church and the companion of an apostle; and when he had "succeeded"—as he and his party called it—he doubted not that his fame would go down to posterity in the Thessalonian public records, as that of a very great and successful public man.

If so, what an instructive fact is it for all that class of men, that one only record of Demas is from the pen of the very man whom he left alone to a martyr's death. He would never have been heard of beyond his own time, but for the nobler man whom he so basely deserted. And has not many a man since sold himself, body and soul, for place and power, of whom the world, a few years after, knows nothing more, nothing better, than we now know of Demas?

Again, it may be that the form in which the love of the world overcame Demas, was THE DESIRE OF SINFUL PLEASURE.

Thessalonica was the great commercial emporium of the time and region; and like most such places, ancient or modern, was greatly given to gross forms of luxury and licentiousness. It was scarcely less noted for these vices than was Corinth itself; as appears from various ancient writings, and might well be surmised from the earnest exhortations of the apostle, especially in the fourth chapter of his first letter to the church there.

Perhaps Demas tired of the constant self-control and self-denial that the Christian life required, and thought, with longing desire, of the gay scenes of festivity in which he used to partake; the brilliant assemblies, the captivating music, the song and dance and wine—the society whose looseness of morals was a theme for the satirists of the day and a by-word for ages.

Perhaps as he occasionally met old associates from Thessalonica, instead of occupying the time with spiritual converse, learning the state of the church, and sending messages to edify it, he listened with more interest to what was going on in the gay world there, the new amusements and the like—so fostering a taste which should have been exorcised—till, in some fatal hour, he decided to return to scenes, to which, with high hopes and expectations, he had once bidden what he thought and meant should be an eternal farewell.

Is Demas alone in this?

But we can stay no longer over suppositions, which might be indefinitely extended. These are enough to set our minds on a track which each one may profitably pursue for himself—a path amply lighted by the Word and Spirit of God, by the history of the world and the church—too amply lighted, by the experience of our weak, deceiving hearts.

The practical applications of our theme are obvious.

It affords another illustration of the old truth, that self-reliance is dangerous to the Christian professor; that his only safety is in a vital, and not merely formal, union to Christ and his church; that no length or intimacy of association with the most cultivated Christian society can take the place of unceasing watchfulness and prayer against the reawakenings of old principles of life and conduct, smothered but not dead.

Paul, in this letter, speaks of the defection in a way implying that it was a recent thing. Demas must, therefore, have been in these intimate relations with the apostle for as many as six years—since he wrote to the Colossians and to Philemon. He may, not unlikely, have been several years longer—possibly fifteen or sixteen years, or from the time of Paul's visit to Thessalonica. It would seem certain, therefore, that Demas was not a man of small mind, nor wanting in some worthy traits which commended him to the apostle's favor.

But these did not save him from defection. They will be no more likely to save others. They will save no one of us.

The love of the world and true piety can not dwell together. If we would be surely safe, unassailable by fear of suffering, by the allurements of pleasure, by appeals to self-interest in its thousand forms, let us see to it that the love of the world be not buried under a mass of new thoughts, interests, and purposes, to have some day a sudden resurrection, but cast out utterly, and its place occupied by the incoming, in all its power, of a new affection—supreme love to God.

Very likely you have asked yourselves, in what way Demas's defection began to show itself.

We can not tell. But does it not seem to you probable, that it first appeared in a want of enjoyment of closet duties, and then in irregular attendance on the meetings for social prayer, with which we know those early Christians sustained each other's faith and hope? We find from the record that Paul was not utterly denied, even in his last imprisonment, all intercourse with friends. Luke, the beloved physician, was with him occasionally at least, ministering, no doubt, to the bodily weakness of age, as well as spiritual consolation; Onesiphorus from Asia; Linus, afterward pastor of the church at Rome; Pudens, the son of a senator, and Claudia his bride, the daughter of a British king. These were at least his occasional visitors. Perhaps they all—with others undeterred by fear or shame—were sometimes allowed to visit him together, though the Mamertine prison could hardly have held them otherwise than standing crowded around him. What "meetings for prayer and conference" these must have been then and there!

No doubt he sometimes uttered to these friends, in substance, the sublime thoughts and emotions which he was penning to Timothy. Perhaps some day, filled with the spirit of prophecy, he

stood before them, his face glowing like an angel's in the dim light of the prison, and raising as far as he could that arm whose chain clanked an affecting accompaniment, he said to them: "Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. . . . I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. . . . If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. . . . The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: the Lord knoweth them that are his. . . . I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." And how tender must have been the look he turned on those loved faces, as he added: "And not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing."

Oh, how much did Demas lose, when Paul said this, and he was absent! Had Thessalonica's wealth, or honors, or gayeties, any thing to compensate for such a loss? To have heard these words from Paul then and there, would have recompensed an age of suffering.

But Demas had forsaken him, having loved this present world. You ask, instinctively, whether this defection of Demas must be regarded as a final, fatal apostasy.

Of this, no one can speak positively, for these words are the last we hear of him. It certainly seems unlikely that he ever returned to his allegiance; though such return is by no means inconsistent with the possibilities of God's long-forbearing grace.

How happily it would light up the picture, if there only were some such hint as we have here concerning Mark, with whom Demas is honorably coupled in the letter to Philemon—coupled with him here also, but alas! with a character how different from the former!

You remember that on their first missionary journey, Mark, through timidity or indolence, forsook Paul and Barnabas at Pamphylia and returned to Jerusalem; and that when he would have rejoined them on their second journey, Paul would not receive him, and on that account parted angrily from Barnabas.

But Mark's repentance seems to have been real and permanent. Paul speaks commendingly of him, as a helper during his first imprisonment; and now, about to die, he writes to Timothy: "Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

Once rejected, now penitent and faithful, he is sent for to cheer the apostle's dying hours. But of Mark's helper in the service of the former imprisonment, the last words are: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."

Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." —Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace." —Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON XXI.

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FAITH IN THE ATTRIBUTES.

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharoah's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."—HEBREWS 11: 7, 8, 24, 25.

THE faith of Noah, of Abraham and of Moses, is most fully described of all that is recorded in this chapter of faithful men, because they occupy the most conspicuous position in the Hebrew history. These three men stand at the transitions of history—that history which, according to the record of his word, God himself had arranged and ordered. They stood at the test-places. They were the strong pivots around which all human affairs turned. And although Enoch was eminent for holy living, and did great and lasting good—we may believe—in influencing the men of his

age, yet his faith was not so directly and openly and remarkably seen in its results on the world, and especially on the chosen people of God, as was the faith of these others. The faith of Isaac and of Jacob and of Joseph, of Joshua, of Gideon and even of Samuel and of David, does not stand out in such bold relief, in such towering grandeur, as does the faith of Noah, of Abraham and of Moses—a faith exercised when the foundations of the world were moved, or when the great currents of human society, which were for ever to determine the opinion and the thought of the world, were beginning to take their permanent channels. This is the reason therefore why here and elsewhere in the New Testament the faith of these great men stands prominently forth. The religious interests of the world, in their time, were committed to them. It is true indeed that they could not fully comprehend all which was wrapped up in the sacred trust committed to them; yet they appreciated the trust, and by them the great periods of religious confidence were marked. It is interesting and profitable, at times, to make some comparison of these great examples of Christian life; to notice the peculiar circumstances in which each of these great men lived; to see the peculiar exercise of faith, which the time and the work called out; to notice how the same implicit confidence in God's word, which existed in all, was differently developed in respect to different attributes of the divine character; and to see, as we can now see, and as neither of them *could* see (for then it would have been *sight* and not faith), the great results which have been so full of blessing from that time to this.

Let me try to direct your attention to the especial characteristic of faith in each of these three eminently *faithful* servants of God. It is not to be denied that the substantial elements of faith were the same in each, nor that each possessed all the characteristics of faith which the other possessed,—faith is one every where; but I think we shall obtain ground for comfort, for caution and for strength, if I shall be able to show the *prevailing* characteristic in each. Especially in times like our own, when the foundations of the nation seem to be moved, may we find that the strength which animated their faith is able to sustain us also!

I. The faith of Noah reached its maturity in the building of the ark. That work was committed to him, because his previous character with God had been fully established. He was a just man among a wicked people; he was an upright man; he was a man of faith among faithless and self-justifying men. "Noah was a just man," it is said, "and upright in his generation; and Noah walked with God." "The earth was corrupt before God: the earth was filled with violence." "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." He was the preacher of righteousness in those corrupt and violent generations. Now however much we may amplify

the thought of the circumstances in which Noah faithfully proclaimed the word of God to the wicked inhabitants around him, however directly we may bring before our minds the building of the ark, the length of time, the patience, the labor, the reproach, the contempt, the simple adherence to the one vital thought and belief, the resolution to begin, the firmness to persevere, the confidence to complete his great work, the prediction of a flood to come, while as yet the order of nature was not diverted from its regular course—so fertile a theme for ridicule on the lips of the ingenious and the wicked—and so, by bringing up before our minds those years of work and of warning, expand and strengthen our conception of Noah's implicit trust in God—we shall leave out one most important thought if we do not think of that sublime power in Noah's heart, by which he was enabled to give up the whole world to destruction. It could not have been an entirely natural and easy thing for Noah to commit friends, neighbors, communities, the wide sea of populous life around him—wicked as it all was—to inevitable ruin. The human nature was then what it now is. The tendency to palliate and to relieve the horror of wickedness, was strong then as it now is. The inclination to bring from character, life, circumstances, social influence, from nature and even from the course of Providence, some equivalent, which should in some way balance the tremendous evil of sin, existed then as now. It required something more than the natural tendencies of the human heart to hold firm and resolute, the purpose; to say, day by day, in the building of the ark, to himself, to *his own heart* as much as to the life around him, that all the world was soon to be destroyed. Left to this one vision of men in their exposure, in the dreadful and overwhelming nature of their destruction—left to think only of their sufferings; to think of the pouring floods of heaven which would bear up the ark; of the rising waters which would engulf houses and lands, valley and city, trees and hills and mountains, and at length submerge the whole habitable earth; left to look at this dreary prospect only, we may well imagine how the faith of even Noah might have shrunk back; how his heart might have fallen beneath its high hope and single purpose; how he might have intermitted his warnings; how, at the very least, he might have labored, only with a dull and selfish determination to save himself. Who could hope to convince men whose wickedness demanded such an overthrow? But there was an energy in the faith of Noah, which was more than human. It was the energy which rose high above the wide mass of wickedness and misery, and which rested its weakness on the Infinite Strength. The faith of Noah was faith in God's *justice*. It was a faith in the righteous and unvarying movement of his eternal government. It believed the *word*: it did the *work*: it rested on the just character of an eternal God.

Noah was. therefore a preacher of *righteousness*, as we are taught, to all his generation. He was the plain, earnest advocate of God's commandments and of the punishment of disobedience, among a debased people, who had passed the line of shame and of honor and of conscience. He preached *righteousness* by his words, in his conversation and in the gatherings, by his work, in the patient labor at the ark from day to day, from week to week, from month to month. And righteousness implies all those great thoughts which are linked to it—government, authority, penalties for transgression, condemnation following, and suffering, ruin, death. Noah was, therefore, a preacher of law; and especially to all who refused to obey the law, or to return to its precepts, he was a preacher of condemnation. And therefore do we read, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he *condemned the world*." By *faith*, he prepared the ark; for he believed God's word, that his own house should be saved from a coming destruction. By faith, he was warned of God; for he credited and accepted the warning. By faith, he was moved with fear; for he bowed trustfully before the divine speaker, and in humble, filial reverence sought his work. By faith he, in every one of these acts, *condemned the world*. He asserted and maintained the just and terrible punishment of every one who should neglect or despise the warning he had received (though the *things* were not seen as yet), who should be unaffected by reverential fear, who should fail to build and to make use of the ark. The ministry of Noah was a ministry of condemnation therefore not because he did not love men, not because God did not love men—(the very centre of his justice in that great enforcement of law at the Deluge was his love for mankind)—but because men refused to be loved with a holy and pure affection; because they chose for themselves only the terror and not the comfort of the law—war with it, and not peace from it; opposition, and not union; fear and suffering, and not love and happiness. His ministry was a ministry of *faith*—faith in *God's Justice*. He was not destitute of faith in God's love, in God's mercy, in God's wisdom, in God's power to reclaim all the wicked of his generation; but the very strength of the faith of Noah is seen, in that, while his work was a work of changeless warning, and his life was placed at that solemn period of the world when all the deep emotions of pity and of love must have been stirred from the foundations, he confided in that justice which rests on inscrutable wisdom and unfailing love.

It may be added, that mercy was not wanting even then. There was mercy shown in the delay, and the space for repentance. "The *long-suffering* of God *waited*, in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." But neither his patience nor

his mercy availed with the wicked people. The preaching of righteousness and of condemnation was an indifferent thing to them. The ark was completed, and they cared not for it. The four families made themselves safe from the coming storm. Noah became fully the heir of the righteousness which is by faith; and they turned not aside from their common pursuits to think or to consider. "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not, till the flood came and took them all away."

II. How different was the especial characteristic of the faith of Abraham! Although at times he was required to give testimony against the wickedness of men, yet it can not be so fully said of him as of Noah that his one especial work in life was to be witness against the sins of men. And although Abraham's faith included implicit trustfulness in the divine justice, as when he saw the cities of the plain destroyed, yet the peculiar reliance of Abraham's faith, from his earliest to his latest years, was on *God's personal promise.* And this was not simply faith in a promise at some one great important period of life, like Noah's faith in the divine personal promise during the time of the flood, but it was faith in one great promise made to Abraham *only*, and reaching all through his journeying, from the time when he left Mesopotamia till he died in the promised land. It was a promise which was gradually defined. It was at first only general, and as Abraham followed obediently the successive steps indicated to him, the limit of the promise grew more and more narrow, the method of the promise more and more clear, until in his old age Isaac was established in life within the patriarch's own house. Notice the development of this promise to him. The first and the evident intimation of the promise was made to Abraham in Mesopotamia, in the first call. That first call was for him to leave his own land and kindred, and to seek another land. And then departing for the land of the Chaldees, removing from his kindred, save only from his father's house, and from Lot, not knowing whither he went, nor how the implied promise was to be accomplished, he came to Haran. Thus was he called to go out unto *a place*—some place, which he did not yet know—which he was *after* to *receive* for *an inheritance.* He obeyed; and he went out not knowing whither he went. Then came the more definite second call. The second call was, that he should leave his country, his kindred, and his *father's house—all*—to go unto the land which I will show thee. "I will make of thee a great nation." "Thou shalt be a blessing." "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." And Abraham came to Canaan, and the promise is still more defined: "Unto thy *seed* will I give *this* land." Then, afterward, Lot is separated, and the promise is more fully developed. "Lift

up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, eastward and westward. For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." "Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."

Another interval tests the faith of Abraham in God's promise, and confirms the simple obedience of a devoted life; and there is then another broader glance into the future. "Know of a verity," is now the message, still given to a childless man, "that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years;" "and afterward shall they come out with great substance," "but in the fourth generation they shall come hither again."

At length, after years have passed, Ishmael is born; and although the promise is now confirmed with the covenant of circumcision, and the name of Abram changed to Abraham, yet the divine word in respect to Ishmael is, This is not he. And then, after years again, the birth of Isaac is announced. And now, in the son of his old age, he sees both the temporal and the spiritual promises are to be fulfilled. The nations and the kings which in future times are to arise from the children of Isaac, now gladden the far-reaching thought of Abraham's faith. The grievous servitude of four hundred years does not escape the mind of the joyous believer in God's promises; but the more distant return of a multitude to the fair land of their ancestor, happy in the abundance, the riches, the favor which God pours upon them in clustering vines and luxuriant pastures and fruitful flocks, is present to his mind, and make all the servitude of centuries like a thin line, which separates him from the boundless blessings of his posterity; and still, beyond all this, the distant generations rise up to call him blessed; and in the long future shall appear the great Deliverer, mysteriously indicated from the earliest time. All the fullness of the great promises which God had made to him appears now as never before. That which was only a vague encouragement at the first, that which was but the dim outline, in God's kind favor, to one strangely selected, is now bright with the clear shining of his goodness, distinct in its comprehensive vista down the future, and present in substantial and happy reality to his mind. What profound and happy repose now in the great promise! What trust, never more to be shaken, in the simple pledge of the Infallible Goodness! What security beneath his certain words! What assurance, firm, enduring, that there can be no reversal! And so, again, years pass swiftly by, in the joyous thoughts of Abraham's heart; and Isaac, the child, becomes the lad and the young man. And this only son is now to be the test which can measure the trust and the faith of Abraham—the test of the long, slowly-gathered experience of the past—the test of the present

happy hope, dashed suddenly to the earth—the test of the soul clinging to God's simple word, as it glances again forward down that pictured vista, and as, with backward glance, it vainly tries to gather all the meaning of the way from Ur of Chaldea. "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and he said unto him, Abraham. And he said: Behold! here I am." Here I am, to obey; here I am, to *believe*; here I am, to *trust*. "And he said: Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Wilt thy step falter now, O great-hearted man of God? Art thou now present to obey, to believe, to *trust*? Surely, the most solemn pledges of the Almighty will not be falsified, if the patriarch refused to slay the child, on whose innocent brow lies the blessing of the past—in whose gleeful face is read the picture of the future. It is more than human strength which conquers now. Now is the ripened energy of Abraham's faith; not the energy of faith in the divine *justice* so much (although he can not distrust that) as the energy of faith in the *promise* of the all-wise God. By faith, Abraham, when he was tried, *offered* up Isaac; and he that received the promises offered up his only-begotten son, of whom it is said: "That in *Isaac* (not in Ishmael) shall thy seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead." The mighty faith of Abraham was a faith in the *divine veracity*, pledged personally to a single feeble man,—in the simple truthfulness of the divine nature.

But it grasped in its strength the *whole character* of God. For every attribute would be exercised rather than that word should fail—the omnipotence of God; the creative power to pour new life into the body of the offered victim; the justice and the love of God.—*just* consideration of all the hopes so long formed in Abraham's soul, dear to him as life itself,—the love for Abraham which made known to him the fate of Sodom before its overthrow, and which had led him in friendship all through life; the wisdom of God, for his failure to fulfil his pledge will show that it is folly for man to trust him. All these, to Abraham, and all the attributes of Deity, were pledged to support the simple truthfulness of God in a simple, oft-repeated promise. And all these, and more than these, and more than we can conceive of them, are pledged to every one who simply trusts the *word* of God. As to Abraham the promise was solemnly confirmed, so to every child believing in his unchangeable word does the solemn affirmation come: "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, . . . That in blessing, I will bless thee—I will abundantly bless thee—because thou hast obeyed my voice."

III. Let us look now briefly at the faith of Moses. Very different from these two, is the chief reliance of Moses' faith. Moses was not destitute of confidence in the divine justice or in the divine veracity personally promised. There were occasions, all along his life, from the plagues of Egypt to the miracles on the wicked at the border of Canaan, when he found it necessary to trust the justice of God. There were times when the promise made to him personally, at the burning bush, "Certainly I will be with thee," was immediately fulfilled, because Moses believed in God's word to him. Yet neither of these was the prevailing manifestation of Moses' trust. Unlike Noah, whose office it was to act *against* the multitude; unlike Abraham, who was the chosen representative for the multitude of a posterity *afar* off, Moses acted *with* the multitude, and *as their immediate present* representative. He left the court of Pharaoh to suffer affliction with the people of God—to be identified with the nation which, with all its sins, was the only nation possessing the true religion. He stood forth at the slaying of the Egyptian buried in the sand, as the voluntary national avenger of blood. At the burning bush of Horeb, he is made the public representative of their race. In the plagues, he is the ambassador of the God of the Hebrews. At the Red Sea and at Sinai and through all the wilderness, he is their leader. And yet, as he advances from one step of the way to another, there is evident no *especial plan in his own thought* by which he is guided. It is contrary to his own inclination, at the first, that he goes from the bush into the presence of Pharaoh. During the days of plagues, no two plagues are revealed to him at the same time, but only one after the other. It is under the especial direction of God that the passover is performed, then the Red Sea opened, then the water brought from the rock, then the law given on Sinai, and then the whole wandering conducted to the borders of Canaan. Step by step, this great leader of a great multitude, among whom is the repository of religion and of law for all ages, is himself led like a little child. Conducting and educating a race, this preacher, prophet, law-giver, takes not a step by the device of his own mind, but looks upward to the divine guidance. Moses' faith was, therefore, faith in the *purpose* of God. He trusted in the superior Teacher, Law-giver and Guide, who knew all the future.

As in Abraham, so in Moses, there is the general education and definition of faith to his own mind. At the first only, the general purpose of God to relieve the Israelites from bondage, and their return to the land of Abraham and Isaac, is understood. But that purpose he trusted. The development of that purpose he trusted. His *leadership* was controlled by his confidence in that design. From the burning bush to Pisgah, this is the one conspicuous characteristic of his repose in God. And, just as in Noah's life, faith in

God's justice accompanied his faith in all other attributes; and, as in Abraham's life, faith in God's promise to himself, in God's veracity directed to a single individual of the race, accompanied his faith in God's justice and love and power; so in the life of Moses, faith in the *purpose* of God for a nation over which he was appointed, accompanied all his faith in God's justice at the punishment of Pharaoh, in God's power at the stricken rock, in God's glory and majesty at Sinai, in God's love for his people while leading them to the promised land. The faith of Moses was faith in the divine *wisdom;* in his wisdom exercised for the children of Abraham, though it frowned in the plagues on Pharaoh; in his wisdom, though it shone in letters of fire and in the splendor of his glory from Sinai; in his wisdom, though it was concealed in the mystery of the forty years' wilderness; in his wisdom still, when it justified itself, at length, on the borders of the promised land, and pointed to the still greater developments of the future.

Nor are we at liberty to think that such a faith was an easier faith than that of Noah or of Abraham. What high and steady resolve it needed in the midst of such a multitude as that which followed Moses' direction; in the debased and distracted life of Egypt; in the murmuring and blind discontent of the journey; in the hardihood and effrontery and idolatry before Sinai; in the self-constituted judgment of the people during the whole long course! What faith did it need in the divine purpose, to endure all the repining and confused clamor of this unreasonable and short-sighted multitude, whom God was educating, and who did not see, and who would not see if they could, any higher design than the selfish arrival at the happy land!

And now that we can see, as they could not see, the great results of their faith, how does it enhance our estimation of the simple, child-like trust of these three eminent servants of God, that they did not know, that they did not see, the immense issues wrapt up in their simple truthfulness! The very singleness and artlessness which were chief elements of their faith, existed, because *they* did *not see* the great consequence. How wonderful was the energy of that faith which *simply* clung, which did *nothing but* to cling to the Justice, the Veracity, the Wisdom of God; which, through all the variety of the tests, adhered,—which, in every recurring and intensified trial, held fast, and still ever more *held fast*, to the eternal attributes of God! How glorious have been the consequences, which have hung upon the single thread, by which the life of these great-hearted men was held to the life of God. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the *saving of his house.*" By faith he prepared the ark for the saving *of the world.* By faith he placed a holy life and a sanctified family at the second head-

ship of the race. By faith, he directed the eyes of all coming ages to himself, as the great religious hero, who stood alone with God, the hand of the human in the hand of the divine, and confident in God's justice, saw the world perish from his very side. "By faith, Abraham, called to go out into a place which he should *afterward* receive for an inheritance, obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went." By faith, rising early in the morning to take his journey to Mount Moriah, without questioning, he sacrificed promptly the hope of a lifetime centered in his son Isaac. And although, perhaps, he never saw it to be more than the test of his personal trust, God knew it was to make him, and we now see it was to *fit* him to be, not only the founder of a nation, wonderful in the world's history, but to place in him the human headship of the Hebrew Church. The eyes of the faithful would never cease to look to him, as the type of trust in the *one word* of God's veracity. "By faith Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." It was faith in God's purpose which led him to step forth from the palace of Pharaoh; it was *still* a sublime faith in God's purpose which led him up Mount Nebo, to meet death there alone, as God had directed, to be without a sepulchre among a people who loved, like Abraham and like Jacob and like Joseph, a rock or a cave, as a memorial to other generations. Surely at the first, Moses thought only of releasing the Hebrews from bondage and restoring them to the land of Abraham; but God made his faith in his wisdom the means of revealing to the world the perfect wisdom of his moral law, and the unfolding wisdom of his great providential plan of redemption for the Jew and the Gentile.

Think, then, of the characteristics of the faith of these men as they should apply to you. For your practical life, think of four things. First, in each case, the peculiar development of faith was adapted to the age of the world in which God had placed the person. Secondly, all the tests were severe. Thirdly, in each instance, faith required abundant works: the years at the building of the ark,—the lifetime of journeys, and the toiling up Mount Moriah,—the wearisome guidance of a turbulent people for a generation in the wilderness. Fourthly, think of the exceeding simplicity of the faith of these great men—the artless and severe simplicity of the one-confiding thought in the divine direction.

In the application of these principles to yourself, look, then—first, at your own circumstances; look at your life. What is there in respect to which you ought to have confidence in God? If you seek, you can find it. What is there in your personal relations, in your domestic, social, public, national attachments and duties? Have faith in God—in his justice, in his veracity, in his wisdom.

And then, secondly, do not complain if the test is severe, and if you can not see the result of faith. It would not be faith, if you could see the end from the beginning; and faith would be of a low order if the test were not severe. Thirdly, let works go parallel with faith. Are you disposed to think of the divine justice and the fearful coming retribution upon the wicked? Seek the simple *word* revealed: do the simple *work* commanded: rest on the eternal justice of God. Are you disposed to think of God's promise? Make works move step by step through the various shades and degrees of the promises. Trust God, as Abraham did, from one day to another, from one place to another. Do you think rather of God's purpose? Still let works and faith go hand in hand. Like Moses, let the plan of life be in union with God's plan. Let his purpose and your purpose be one and eternal. As a great and substantial help, fourthly, let your faith be simple and single, simplify it, do not complicate it. Have faith in one attribute of God more than in another if you like, according to your need. God will not chide you, if it be through Christ. Trust your life, your destiny, to the single thread. It will not, *can not* break.

SERMON XXII.

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THE CHRISTIAN GRACE OF KINDNESS.

"PUT on, therefore, kindness." — COLOSSIANS 3: 12.

THERE are, then, some things in Christian character which are to be "put on." They do not wait, like other qualities, the slow development of the inward life. They are not the result only of long years of discipline and self-conquest, but they may be and should be worn as new habits from the outset of the Christian course. They belong to the expression and manners of religion; to its outward activities, and its benign influences on mankind. And though they also grow in grace and beauty with the whole growth of the religious life, they are to be "put on" at its beginning; "put on," not as a transient covering, but as a fresh vesture fitted to the new man in Christ.

In nature, the end and crown of all its multiplied growth is the ripened fruit, and yet no sooner does life move within the plant,

than it "puts on" robes of foliage, which are to wave the summer long in beauty, while its slower and more precious products mature. So in the Christian life there are graces of outward expression which should appear as the first symptoms of the renewed life, and should bloom in freshening strength till all the fruits of holiness are ripened for the heavenly garner.

There are many things in the Christian character which cannot be put on. Faith cannot be put on. Its first germ is divinely implanted, and all its power and growth is nourished by the Spirit of God. Love cannot be put on, nor knowledge; neither experience, nor patience. But kindness can; and so can courtesy and gentleness, mercy and humbleness of mind, and all those qualities of outward manner and action which adorn the Christian life.

It is true, indeed, that these outward graces and ornaments of piety are not, in the highest sense, tests of Christian character. Character is to be known by its fruits, not by its attire. It is easier to be gentle than to be pure. It is more natural to be kind than to be holy. These external qualities of goodness which are to be put on, are not so much new creations in the character as they are discoveries and restorations of native qualities, which were lost and scattered in the fall. They exist in fragments in human nature at the worst, now and then reäppearing in some signal instance, like the honor of Regulus, the justice of Aristides, or the friendship of Damon and Pythias, and showing the possibilities of outward goodness even in the Pagan soul. They are found in strange union even with the inhumanities which are rife in modern heathenism. The Africans of the interior will receive the traveller kindly, and undergo toil and suffering for his sake; and at another time, with a fitfulness hard to explain, will rob him of his last possession and leave him to die alone. They will exhibit the frankest good-nature and liberality, and yet, at some sudden freak of fear or superstition, will, in a few hours after, torture without pity one of their own people, who has shared from childhood all their joys and fellowships.

It is one office of Christianity, therefore, to revive these lost and fragmentary instincts of good-will, and give them ascendency over all the baser passions of our nature. This office it administers even in advance of its greater and saving work in the soul of man. Not only does it teach the disciples of the great Redeemer to "put on kindness," but it enables human nature—yet untouched by renovating grace, yet too ignorant, perhaps, to understand its deeper needs and hopes—to rally its better feelings, to recall its lost instincts of good-will to its kind, and so to rise out of the gloom and degradation which have been its portion. For kindness is, radically, a genial recognition of our kind; the outgoing of a fellow-feeling; the expression of an inborn sympathy, belonging to us all, as of one blood and history, one common

heritage of need and of joy. This faint rudiment of peace and good-will, which had well-nigh perished out of many souls, is brought out and made powerful by the Gospel. Since these glad tidings have come, since that song of peace sounded out over Bethlehem, since the story of the Cross has spread from lip to lip through many nations, and the words and life of this Saviour have gone forth, no man can tell how far—the whole world has begun to "put on kindness." The horrors of past ages, the inhumanities which were once the usage of mankind, recede everywhere before the dawn of Christian knowledge. They are found now almost alone in the deepest jungles of the unexplored continent, and the solitude of distant islands of the Southern Sea. We are shocked, indeed, at some forms of injustice and oppression which linger in Christian nations; but the fact that we are shocked, and that we abhor, with deepening detestation, habits and customs which were respectable in generations near our own, is evidence how surely this penetrating influence of the Gospel is softening the hardnesses of human nature, and tempering the wrongs of our earthly state. Whatever ascendency, in our times, has been gained to gentleness, courtesy, and kindness, is due to the benign influence of the Gospel of Christ. It has reached out to bless multitudes who never yet have welcomed its great gift to their hearts. The fact that some of these outward excellences of character can be gathered and put on even where the heart of man is unsanctified, should only lead the Christian to wear them in their highest grace and perfection. The fact that these can be worn as a mere convenience and comfort to mankind, perhaps sometimes as a disguise for selfish purposes, should only incite every follower of Christ to give the loveliest and most attractive expression to a true piety, that his Master may thereby be glorified.

And this suggests our first remark, that *so far as any character is unkind it is unchristian.*

Kindness may exist without Christianity, but Christianity will not exist without genuine and growing kindness. There have, indeed, been individuals of much influence in the Church of Christ who have been sadly deficient in gentle and winning traits. There have been communities and generations of men who have been called to stern services in Christian history, and have seemed to neglect and put off kindness for manners more rigorous and severe. Yet, both with the individuals and the communities, it must be confessed that, much as they have done for Christianity, they would have accomplished far more had they been wise enough to keep, with all their strength, an unchanged kindness. Men do not always recognize Christian principle, even when pure and disinterested. It may be too bare and decisive to win their reverence, much more their love. They doubt its motives, and

are, perhaps, repelled by its demands. But when it comes, just as strict and uncompromising, but clothed, like Him who was the truth, with expressive gentleness and sympathy, our opposition dies, our native unsubmission is soothed, and we reverence it and adopt it as our master. It is true universally that kindness adds nothing but strength to the strongest character. It is still more true, that it makes the most Christian more Christ-like. That is a totally wrong notion taken up by some good men, that if only earnestly engaged in the cause of religion, they may be rude or careless as to the lesser matters of the intercourse and the life. Many a Christian teacher has absorbed himself so completely in the study of divine truth, has pored and pondered so incessantly on the themes of the Gospel, that he has lost all capacity to express that Gospel in a winning behavior. He has gone about among men, honored for his truth, and admired for his learning, but loved for nothing, and powerless to attract a soul to the Saviour. Many a private Christian, through some petty pride, or what is often the same thing, some false and morbid diffidence, has shrouded his whole life in an atmosphere of distance, through which never broke toward man or child one genial ray which warmed another heart or quickened another pulse to love or gratitude. Instead of putting on kindness, such men have put on indifference and, sometimes, rudeness. They have unwittingly disguised their Christian character in a mean attire. Let us understand, that whatever it be which hinders the free outgoing of kindness from our life and manners, it is a contradiction of the spirit of Christianity. Kindness is a grace so common, so easy, and put on at so small a cost, that when that is missing, men will not usually look further for evidences of a Christ-like mind. Insomuch as we want that, though Christians at heart, we are plainly unchristian.

It is to be remarked again that kindness, though it be at first "put on," *becomes itself a source of strength and nourishment to all our deeper and essential graces.* Just as the spreading foliage of the tree not only stands for ornament and shade, but draws from sun and air by every leaf a proper nourishment, so all these outward activities of Christian feeling bring back to the heart their own return of strength and life.

The chief resources of religious character and growth must come, undoubtedly, from inward communion with the unseen God. But it is still true that many a really devout life is made gloomy and useless for want of that refreshment which can come into the heart only through the channels of kindness it has kept closed. There are, without question, native differences of temperament which tinge a Christian's life. Some can give expression to their feelings more readily than can others. But all these

diversities of gift are trivial compared with the power we have ourselves either to put on or to suppress these outgoings of good-will. There is many a genial nature which lies buried underneath a timid indolence or an evil education. And there is not a soul so bare and unsusceptible, but it might with little effort wear an attractiveness and spread a glow of kindness all its own. How often is it true, that a character which has been cold and reserved for years, at last grows soft in age, and discloses a wealth of tenderness and joy never before unsealed. How often have those who seem to stand apart from all the sweeter fellowships of life, and to possess no faculty of expressing kind emotion, burst, in some hour of need, through all these barriers of habit, and poured out floods of feeling and affection, which no one dreamed they had. And in these hours of outspoken sympathy, their own nature has thrilled with a new life, their hearts have leaped like prisoners set free. They have drunk from a long-forgotten fountain in the depth of their own hearts. They have grown rich with their own hid treasure. Kindnesses are the golden coinage of our better nature, the currency of our affections, the outward token of all our inward charity and grace. He who will be a miser of such wealth, and hoard and hide that which was given him to disperse abroad, will suffer the fate of misers. He will be poor and narrow-hearted, unhappy and unloved.

But passing from ourselves, we are bidden to put on kindness chiefly *that we may lighten the burdens of others' lives and multiply their love and joy.*

If we thoughtfully consider the most serious evils which afflict our fellow men, we shall find that the only sure relief which we can offer them is kindness. Mere physical ills can, indeed, be palliated or cured. Ignorance can be enlightened, and abject want can be partially supplied. But when we turn to those constant and universal forms of trouble which weigh down the soul of man, we have no cure to give. We can only bring our kind offices, our sympathy, and our prayers. Take sorrow, for instance; how helpless we are in every endeavor actually to remove its burden from another heart. We can "weep with those who weep." We can sometimes shelter them awhile from the intrusion of accustomed cares. We can lift up our supplications to our common Father for his consoling grace. But we cannot alter one event or abate one pang of grief which God has sent upon them. There are sorrows, moreover, so personal and peculiar, that they must be borne unnamed, in the solitude of a single breast. We may not even speak our sympathy. Yet in all these desolations of affliction, there is an inconceivable solace in mere kindness. The truths which must be spoken to mourners are old and familiar. They may be feebly realized

fusion of sorrow. But kindness is ever new and fresh and instant in its blessing. It changes nothing of another's grief, but it affords an outlet for emotion. It leads to other thoughts, and wakens other feelings. It wins some moments of forgetfulness. It rescues the mourner from that solitude in which he seems to stand before a chastising God, and assures him that he is but one of many who have suffered the same discipline. In a thousand nameless ways it lightens those burdens which none of us could bear alone and live. The wisest instruction, the most consoling words of Scripture, are often powerless in the shock of a great grief; but the consciousness of human sympathy, the kindness that hovers round us in simple and scarce-noticed acts of love, stays us, and soothes us, and strengthens us to trust and to endure.

But turn to other forms of evil which are more constant and universal even than affliction: the trials which spring out of the contrasts of earthly condition, the unequal distribution of wealth and knowledge and talent, the artificial separations which pride and selfishness have built up in society, the needless jars and enmities which rise out of mere self-will, out of ill-chosen friendships, or out of native incompatibilities of taste or aim. These, after all, make up the commonest and most wide-spread miseries of mankind. These cloud more once-happy days, alienate more once-loving hearts, and make more lives bitter, than all the great calamities which smite a generation. And these are all incurable till we have put on kindness. Many inequalities of our earthly lot are undoubtedly to be perpetual. The great extremes, indeed, of despotism and servitude are passing away before the enlightened civilization of the Gospel. But the contrasts of station and riches, of knowledge and power, based as they are largely on native gifts and providential dispensation, will continue to the end of time. No political equality can prevent these wide distinctions in society. No laws can alter them. No earthly power or teaching can prevent their generating pride and indifference on the one hand, and envy and hatred on the other. This has been the tendency of every people and every age till checked by nobler sentiments of Christian kindness. This tendency appears even in our new land. Pride of birth, pride of wealth, pride of family, and all the snobbish pretensions of assumed superiority, are stealing into the hearts and lives of many who might have learned a better lesson, nay, of some who profess to be disciples of the lowly man of Nazareth. There are not a few, called by the name of One that made himself of no reputation for our sakes, and whose theory, as his followers, is to esteem others better than themselves, who are unnecessarily anxious not to be confounded with ordinary mortals, and to have it understood that their associations are select and rare. There are multitudes of unpretending Christians in every community who are made to feel, with a

gratuitous pain, their providential inferiority. There are multitudes not Christians who are willing, for this cause, to doubt and despise the exhibitions of a Christianity so belied. For all these contradictions and resentments Christian kindness is the one sure remedy. It will at last cure them. When high and low, rich and poor, all of every condition and endowment who are followers of Christ, have put on kindness, these distinctions and contrasts will be neutralized. They will not be annihilated, but all their power to separate, to corrupt, or to wound, will be destroyed forever.

Nor will the triumph of kindness be less signal over those forms of private suffering which spring from repulsions of taste and incompatibilities of temper. These, though often unseen, swell immensely the tide of human wretchedness. Life, in all its courses, has proved to many a disappointment for no other cause. Friendship has seemed a mockery, and even wedded love has become a dream and memory. Let us touch gently this form of earthly desolation; but let us not deceive ourselves as to its frequency or bitterness. Pass over utterly all those instances where the house-door closes on a realm of petty tyranny, or on a scene of daily petulance and recrimination. Pass over those homes where a kind of armed neutrality, calm and unrelenting, stands guard over some mutual sin or some discovery made too late. Think only of those sad firesides where the love of early days flickers and fades like the dying embers, stifled beneath a proud self-will that cannot forget and that cannot forgive. Think of those cheerless dwellings where there is the form of happiness without the power; where what were once but trivial misunderstandings, which kindness could have reconciled, have lingered and grown, till voices and manner and life itself are changed, and the home is emptied of all love. Think of those households where mere neglect has done its gnawing work; where, without one material want unsupplied, or one thought of positive unkindness, years have passed on, in mutual toil and care, without one token of tender appreciation. There is no smile of welcome, no kiss of parting, no word of fondness, no utterance of those old familiar phrases which won the early love, no sweet surprise of pleasure contrived far off by thoughtful regard, no watchful hand outstretched to lighten cares and labors grown heavier with advancing years. A hard nature may contemn such small attentions as beneath its notice. A careless and absorbed nature may see no harm in such neglects. But Christian honor will cherish these tokens of endearment sacred as a marriage vow. It will suffer no blast of earthly care to blight these simple kindnesses, which can make a life tenfold more glad. It will guard its own affections, and teach them new expressions as life passes on. It will rather watch to relieve the cares of others than plead the

engrossment of its own. It will live to help and bless and cheer the hearts which God has put into its trust, nor count a word or action trivial which can increase their joy.

Let no one say that kindness is a small duty or an unworthy theme for our earnest meditation in the house of God. There are duties greater and more urgent for every soul which has not yet repented of sin and believed on the Son of God. There are themes which must oftener occupy us here. But there is no point of Christian duty so simple, there is no grace so easily attainable, there is no power for good so direct and wide, there is no right endeavor which, put forth in earnest, would banish instantly from earth so much of wretchedness, or bring in so much of joy.

SERMON XXIII.

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WHY SHOULD THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST BE AFRAID TO DIE?

"To die is gain. I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better; nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."—PHIL. 1: 21, 23, 24.

I design to address ordinary, average believers, and to show that the feelings of the Apostle Paul about dying are such as common Christians may and ought to entertain, and that such feelings would contribute greatly to their comfort and advancement in piety.

As all the difficulty in the Christian mind on this subject can be traced to unbelief and spiritual ignorance, I will attempt to undermine and remove it by a simple statement of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.

To the poor, lost, guilty and condemned sinner, the Lord Jesus Christ is all and in all. Every blessing for time and eternity is through him, by his mediation and merit, for his sake and glory. We are taught most fully and distinctly that he and he only is the way, the truth, and the life; that in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; that his is the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved;

and that he of God is made unto the believing sinner wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. All the agency, all the love, all the grace of God the Father and of God the Holy Spirit are received through, and only through, Jesus Christ. So that in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; all power and authority; the administration of all things, in heaven, earth and hell, are lodged in him. And this Lord Jesus, so all-sufficient and almighty, is no distant, dreadful being, difficult of approach, but our own flesh and blood, meek and lowly, gentle and tender-hearted, inviting, in accents most assuring, any and all of the human family to participate in his friendship and grace.

Another great and most blessed truth is, that all the good grace and glory that are in Christ, whether by reason of his own plenitude of love and power, or from the Father, or from the Spirit, are to be had by simple, hearty, childlike faith. Pardon, acceptance and adoption, from God the Father; conviction, renewal, holiness, light and strength, from God the Spirit; peace, joy, penitence, hope, heaven, life everlasting, are through Christ alone, and are to be had on no hard terms—are to be had for the taking. They are all a mere gratuity; they are ours without money and without price. Let any man look unto Jesus, let him trust in Jesus, and the infinite fulness that is in him becomes the heritage and the joy of the poor sinner. There is no other way of pardon, protection, life and glory, than this. Faith is the hand of the needy sinner stretched out to receive the benefaction. Faith is the golden key that unlocks the divine treasure-house of grace and glory.

But to be less general. The Bible teaches us that we are *justified by faith*, not by works; that is, not by anything we are, or by anything we can do. We are utterly disabled, disqualified, to furnish the shadow of a basis on which divine mercy may remit the penalty of our sins and give us a title to eternal life. So that it is utterly preposterous for us to dream of being justified by any fancied or real holiness, or repentance, or obedience of our own—by the performance of any commanded or voluntary works whatsoever. Faith—not the deeds of the law, not frames or feelings, not vigils, fasts, or penances, not sufferings nor sacrifices, but simple, unsophisticated, childlike faith—secures us pardon and eternal life. There is no need of a sinner even *thinking* of anything else. The diversion of the mind to some other method is not only foolish, but sinful, and may be fatal. The law can do nothing. If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; and the sooner we die unto the law, the better. Sacrifices, sufferings, penances, vigils, *doings* of any and every kind are all rejected as worth-

less by God, and the sooner we cease from them as dependencies the better. The Lord Jesus Christ is set before us as having atoned for sin and brought in a perfect and everlasting righteousness, and is presented to us as a perfect, living, divinely-accepted substitute; and by believing on him, trusting, looking to him, his atonement and righteousness, with all their rich, inestimable benefits and blessings, are made ours — ours absolutely, ours forever; every sin is pardoned; we are accepted, adopted, made one with Christ, saved in him, safe with him from all evil to all eternity. This is all ours; not because we have in any way or degree fitted ourselves for it, but because we have not, and cannot do this, because we are unrighteous, ungodly, unfit in ourselves. It is ours only by the free overflowing grace and love of Jesus Christ received by faith.

Now, just as these great blessings are ours by faith in Christ from God the Father, so light, and truth, and holiness, and strength, are ours from God the Spirit by faith in Christ. We are sanctified by faith, by faith alone—by faith without works, even as we are justified by faith alone. Sanctification is the sole, unassisted, almighty work of the Holy Spirit, in and for the sake of the Son of God, and received by faith in him. Prayer—the reading of God's Word, the communion of the saints, attendance on the ministry of the truth and sacraments of the church, visiting the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, whatever we denominate Christian good works — do not sanctify, do not strengthen, but Christ sanctifies by the ineffable, secret, and most gracious operation of his Holy Spirit. That Spirit dwells in us, as in the temple of old, abiding with us day and night, never leaving nor forsaking us, and working in us his own fruits and graces in his own time and way; and all this by the will and good pleasure of Jesus, the man of Nazareth, the Son of God. We look to him for this mighty presence, and his sanctifying grace is ours according to our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those Christian good works just named, and all others, are either the instruments and channels, the *means*, of the grace of the Holy Spirit, or they are the evidences and fruits of that grace. The means of grace and the God of grace may never be confounded.

Thus clearly, vividly, evidently set forth before us, is the Lord Jesus Christ as the Fountain—the one source of all the blessings that are in the whole Godhead for perishing sinners. He is our all and in all, and thus preëminently is faith in him made the facile, simple instrument of their complete and perpetual possession.

Oh, that we could evermore keep God's method of our salvation in our mind and heart! Oh, that all dependence on means and works and frames and experiences might give way to exclusive dependence on him as the wisdom of God and the power of God

unto our full salvation! Oh, that we could learn to look away from ourselves, our doings, our sins, our failures, our penitence, our prayers, and look alone unto Jesus in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily!

And this leads me to another observation. While the Lord Jesus Christ is thus a perfect, never-failing, ever-present substitute and Redeemer, we in ourselves, to the end of our lives, are sinful and abominable. A superficial, hasty self-inspection, under the influence of our pride and self-conceit, will lead us to imagine that we are righteous, and to thank God that we are not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, and to bless ourselves on account of our observance of moral and Christian precepts and ordinances. We are all Pharisees by nature. But a calmer, profounder view in the light of God will change all this and reveal us to ourselves, unspeakably, incomparably unworthy and sinful, and compel the cry, God be merciful to me a sinner. To the latest day of his life, the real Christian must own that he has a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. To the last, the language of Job—I am vile—I abhor myself; of Isaiah—We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and of Paul: I am carnal, sold under sin: the good that I would I do not. I am less than the least of all saints, the chief of sinners—will express the deep and sad experience of sin in the heart and life of the believer in Christ. There is nothing in the feelings, frames, exercises and works of the Christian in which he can find any deep repose, any living satisfaction whatsoever. He casts his own righteousness aside; he does not wish to be seen by God in it. Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of God by faith. I will go in the strength of the Lord God. I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.. His *growth* in grace; his progressive transformation into Christ's image; his becoming more and more meet for heaven, are facts—are realities verified by God himself in his word; but they are matters rather of faith than of sight; to a great extent they are invisible, undiscoverable by himself. There is no record of a Bible saint whose conviction of personal goodness was the ground of assurance in his advancing years. On the contrary, these two things are given us as the signs of the sanctifying power of the Spirit in the Christian: 1st, A keener, deeper, more vivid sense of personal vileness and sinfulness; and 2d, A keener, deeper, more vivid sense of the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ as a Saviour for him. Without diminishing the value of other evidences (and they have their value and their place), I think I may say that the most delightful, the most assuring, the most solid evidence of true grace is a growing disposition more simply and [redacted]ally to

believe in and be satisfied with the Lord Jesus Christ. The danger of looking much to other evidences is, that the Christian will grow in self-righteousness in proportion as he thinks he is growing in goodness, while this evidence will help him to rejoice in Christ's righteousness and disgust him more and more with his own.

My dear Christian friends, true peace—the peace of God in the soul—and joy, joy in the Holy Ghost—real Gospel comfort and assurance are not found in a sense of freedom from actual sin, nor in a conviction of freedom from the power and pollution of indwelling sin; but, on the contrary, they cannot exist but under a sense, a deep and painful sense, of the existence and power and defilement of the accursed thing. Any assuring consolations that spring from supposed or real religious attainments, from a feeling of personal goodness, are, for the most part, delusive and unscriptural. It belongs to the very nature of the Gospel that its richest blessings are given to those who feel themselves to be sinful, unworthy, hell-deserving. Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners; to heal the morally leprous, to bless the weary, heavy-laden, broken-hearted. God justifies and sanctifies the ungodly, the guilty. The work of grace implies the presence and power of sinful dispositions and sinful acts. If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. And if any man sin—and there is not a just man on the earth that doeth good and sinneth not—he has an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. God has joined these twain together in the Christian, and as long as he is in the flesh he cannot put them asunder. There must be a deep sense of personal sin, in order to a high joy in forgiving and sanctifying mercy. The former is the foundation, the necessary groundwork of the latter. When David bewailed himself and said: "My life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing; my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed," then it was that he had a profound conviction and a precious persuasion that God was his God. "I trusted in thee, O Lord. I said, Thou art my God. Oh, how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" As sin will, so sorrow for it must, continue as long as we are in the flesh. Continually must we weep in secret places over our guilt and shame and wickedness of heart. The Christian can have little comfort and joy in Christ who does not experience godly sorrow, mourning, humiliation, contrition of soul for sin. Alas for us, if our religion is such as to deliver us from the tears and lamentations of broken hearts. God forbid that we should ever imagine that a sinful heart, the source of the profoundest sorrow ever experienced on the earth, is not in us; for grief, anguish, shame on account of sin, is the necessary con-

tion of the sweetest, richest sense of the Redeemer's grace and : "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eter- whose name is holy: I dwell in the high and holy place; im also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. essed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Blessedness itself is tied to a broken, mourning heart. It is when we mourn for him whom we have pierced as one mourneth for his only son, and are in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born, that God says: "I will pour upon him the spirit of grace and of supplications."

John Owen—and I have never known a more skilful spiritual physician than he—says: "As in all worldly joys there is a secret wound, so in all godly sorrow and mourning, considered in itself, there is a secret joy and refreshment; hence it doth not wither and dry up, but rather enlarge, open, and sweeten the heart. I am persuaded that generally they mourn most who have most assurance. And all true gospel mourners will be found to have the root of assurance so grafted in them, that in its proper season—a time of trouble—it will undoubtedly flourish."

I have said enough now to enable you to understand more satisfactorily the experience of the Apostle Paul to which I have referred; for the difference between the weakest and the strongest Christian is neither *what*, nor so great as we generally suppose. Were Paul with us, there can be no doubt that he would in many respects express himself concerning his religious condition very much as we do concerning ours. He would tell us of his doubts and fears and temptations; of his struggles, failures, broken resolutions, wandering thoughts, and wayward affections. He would speak in strongest language of the power of inbred, indwelling sin; of his mixed motives; of his vile ingratitude. He would tell us that the spirit in him lusted against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit; that he was carnal, sold under sin; that the good he would he did not; that he was anxious and troubled about his spiritual state, lest after having preached to others he himself should be cast away; that he was less than the least of all saints. His daily moan would be: "Oh, wretched man that I am;" and, notwithstanding all this, felt doubtless far more deeply than we have ever felt it, he would say: "For me to die is gain; I am in a strait betwixt two. Thanks be to God who giveth me the victory *through* the Lord Jesus Christ." It is a great mistake to suppose that Paul was conscious of a degree of holiness and perfection of which we are not, and that he derived comfort from a view of his goodness. On the contrary, there can be but little doubt that he was far more conscious of unholiness and imperfection than we are; and that he rated his attainments far below the

estimate we often put upon ours. His righteousnesses were all as filthy rags; he repudiated the idea of any dependence on them. He scouted the thought of their being of any value in themselves; "not having mine own righteousness which is of the law." He looked upon his good works as unworthy of his regard. He counted not himself to have attained. He forgot the things that were behind, and kept his eye on the prize in Christ. The solid ground of his hope and of his assurance was the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ was everything to the apostle; and this is precisely what he is to us. The language of a poor sailor exactly describes the common state of himself, of the apostle, and of all Christians: "I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all, and Jesus Christ is my all in all." Paul put his trust in Christ with as much simplicity and sincerity of heart as he could, and we do not find him in a single instance distressing himself with the question whether he truly believed—ordinarily a very difficult, a very needless, a very useless question. As the beggar who stretches out his hand to receive the gift of his benefactor thinks but little of his hand by which he receives the gift, and everything of the boon he takes, so Paul concerned himself very little about the faith by which he received Christ; his whole soul was on and in the Christ whom he received. Christ was a complete Saviour, and he was complete in Christ, however imperfect and unworthy he might be in himself. No change in the fulness of Christ could be made by time. Justification, sanctification, strength, illumination, guidance, protection, safety, complete salvation, were all in Christ for him. A believer is perfectly saved the moment he believes in Christ. *All* his sins are forgiven; he is accepted and adopted by God the Father. The Holy Ghost takes up his abode in him; angels guard him; a mansion in heaven is prepared for him; nothing is wanting; and waiting twenty or fifty years will make no change for the better in these respects. So far as death is concerned, at any moment it is gain unspeakable and full of glory.

Multitudes shrink from dying, because they suppose that by living they can have time to prepare to die; that they will be better prepared in the future than they are now. This is a vain and self-righteous thought. No one—live he as long as did Methusaleh—can fit himself to stand before God in judgment. Preparation for eternity is not a work of time; it is not the result of human efforts; it is not a process of conduct; it is not a matter of progress. The believer in Jesus, by the very act of believing, is instantly, perfectly prepared; for not himself, but Christ, is his Saviour, and he is complete in Christ the moment he believes.

A Christian may wish to live, if not to prepare to die by living, yet to assure himself that he is prepared. And what does this amount to? The true scriptural confidence of salvation is not

what men ordinarily deem it to be. The only reliable assurance any one can have arises, not from a satisfactory survey of his own evidences; not from a clear intellectual apprehension of his own attainments in piety, grace, and goodness; not from a sense of diminished sin and corruption; not from a weariness of the world and worldly things; but only from a survey of the infinite fulness of Jesus Christ by the aid and witness of the Holy Spirit, giving the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, the eyes of his understanding being thereby enlightened, that so he may know what is the hope of his calling. He who looks unto Jesus as his own Saviour, and trusts in him alone, has all the assurance he needs. This sweet and precious Gospel grace is experienced only by those in whom a sense of utter unworthiness, a conviction of profound guilt, a conflict with indwelling sin, often with bitter temptation, are manifested. Any other assurance is presumption. Paul's confidence consisted not so much in knowing his own good estate before God, as in knowing Christ. He was careful to know, not how holy and unblamable his own life was, but how holy and glorious the life and death of Christ were. He knew, not himself, but him whom he believed, and was persuaded that he was able to keep what he had committed to him, against that day.

Oh, my dear hearers, believe—really believe—that Jesus Christ loves you and gave himself for you, and you will be persuaded that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SERMON XXIV.

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THE SONGS OF OUR PILGRIMAGE.

"THY statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage."—PSALM 119 : 54.

OF all subjects with which we are acquainted, laws and statutes seem to be nearly the last and hardest to find expression in songs. The very name, law, is hard. The word is associated with whatever is dry in study, as well as severe in application. In all our thoughts it is as far as possible from poetry and music. Yet the sweet singer of Israel says: "Thy statutes have been my songs."

To say so much is a bold spring of the poet's imagination; for it translates the sternest duty into pleasure, the creaking and rumbling of laborious wheels into the music of stringed instruments and organs. But this is not all. The second clause of the text is scarcely less remarkable than the first. The place of songs is as unexpected as the theme.

"The house of my pilgrimage." This may be a metaphor, expressing a condition of uncertainty and affliction; but more probably the Psalmist intends by those words to describe the common lot of humanity according to his own experience. He brings to sight an inn. Weary travellers, overtaken by night, seek there rest and refreshment, that to-morrow they may pursue their toilsome journey. It is not a place for bursts of happiness, for the songs and joy of home. And life is a pilgrimage. These habitations, however pleasant, are not our rest. Soon we must "arise and depart;" and while we sojourn in them no resources, wisdom, or goodness can resist the invasion of trial and sorrow. The common lot is full of grief. Yet, amidst all that is wearisome, serious, and even melancholy in the happiest earthly conditions, and more than that, in the storms of tribulation and throes of anguish, of which David had so much experience, the statutes of God became his songs: they were his meditation in the night watches, the rejoicing of his heart and theme of his praise. Thus the text is a striking example of bold, poetic language; and the truth it conveys is worthy of the noblest form of expression.

There is intrinsic excellency in the divine statutes which thus

calls forth the grateful praise of holy men with the voice of song. To explain the text we might, indeed, suppose that word *statutes* to be used in a comprehensive sense, including the whole volume of inspiration, and then show how much there is which almost of itself takes the form of poetry, and makes the church and every devout soul vocal with hymns of praise. But such an interpretation rather evades a difficulty than unfolds the real and rich meaning of the text. It does not explain why the specific word statutes—a word far removed from association with joyful singing and connected naturally with conviction and fear—should be chosen instead of some other word, such as oracles, revelations, or promises, equally applicable to the Scriptures as a whole, and suggestive of sacred encouragements and hopes. Some reason is required for which a term of law is singled out, as if to separate that part of the Bible which especially is contemplated with solemn awe as itself the theme of song. It is as much as to say, "This portion of God's Word, which to the impious is matter of contempt and defiance, and to the guilty and convicted is matter of pain and despair, to me is full of light and exultation; and if this is my song, how much more is the whole book of grace a loud choral of praise."

And the law of God is intrinsically amiable. In all the variety of its statutes it is fitted to awaken delight and love, calling into exercise all those pure and elevated affections which naturally express themselves in hymns of joy; for it has inherent excellency; and its effects upon the individual soul and upon all societies are the most admirable which the loftiest imagination can conceive. All its precepts concerning all things are right. From its central commandment to the circumference of its claims and prohibitions, in every lofty statute and every jot and tittle, it is a law of love, a transcript of the character of its Author, who is love. It was "ordained unto life;" and its effect when obeyed is life—life in the glorious evangelical meaning of the word—life of excellence and blessedness—life accomplishing the true end of existence, glorifying God and enjoying his eternal boundless favor. It is revealed on earth as the test of human character, and as the standard of moral nature to which we should be conformed, and in conformity with which the Gospel of Christ finds its consummation in the saved; for beyond this world where the cross stood, in the latest visions of heaven rises the eternal throne—the symbol and the seat of infinite authority. It is the *law* of love that makes the very name of heaven express what it does, purity and bliss transcending our highest imagination.

The ordaining of such a law, the framing it into our feeble speech in ten thousand statutes to be applied to the affections and the conduct, is an infinite blessing to the world. There is no other blessing which can be compared with it, except only the grace

which brings salvation from sin and the curse through our Lord Jesus Christ. To truly loving men it continually opens new views of righteousness, and new vistas of happiness. It enlarges their souls and raises their hopes for this world's welfare, while securing to their transported spirits the felicity of heaven. They "walk at liberty" while they "seek" the precepts. They have "great peace" in their love of the law, and nothing can offend them; for there is perfect harmony of reason with it, sweet approbation of conscience in obedience, and satisfaction of the whole nature in contemplation of it. Well may they adopt the strong words of the Psalmist: "I will speak of thy testimonies before kings, and will not be ashamed. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes." The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the beginning also of songs.

In this fact we have an unexpected exhibition of the manifold goodness of God to us in the present life. We are accustomed to look elsewhere for proofs of the divine benignity; but here are songs out of statutes, joys out of duties and trials. This is a surprise.

We desire enjoyment. Indeed, we might almost say enjoyment is one of nature's birthrights. We can hardly cut ourselves off from it. The world could not be saved by a system of cheerless mortifications of the spirit and torments of the flesh. The Gospel has no sympathy with the miserable asceticism which for so many ages deformed and tortured the Church. It was no more a violence to nature than to religion. It was a scheme of salvation, not by grace to the glory of God, but by works, and it proved, of course, to the shame of man. True piety and sanctification are not wedded to austerity and gloom.

We all need—every Christian needs—exhilaration of spirits along the way of life. There is reason for household music. The spell of worrisome cares should be broken for the weary with songs. There is reason for brass bands in the army. The bursts of martial strains are patience, strength, and courage to foot-sore and fainting ranks. There is reason for music in the Church. If there were no Scriptural sanction for them, as unquestionably there is, still singers and players on instruments should be found in Zion, stringed instruments and organs in her sanctuaries.

God loves music. He has filled nature with it. He brings on our great autumnal blessings arrayed in beautiful apparel, and the march of the harvest is led by the chorus of the forests. By the flitting songsters of the grove and firmament he calls us to songs. But this is only the warbling prelude of the high and devout praise we should render for his goodness. He has made his statutes to inspire our songs. His law—the girdle of the best present enjoyments, the foundation of everlasting hopes—should

stir our deepest and gladdest affections, and tune all human voices to the sweetest and loudest acclamations of praise. The chestnut-burr has a sweet kernel within; and the severest commandment and roughest duty, because enjoined on the divine principle of love, and having its end in love, bears a joy in its bosom. Our Saviour's precept, "Take my yoke," is more an invitation than a statute, because of the sweet melody of the promise it conveys, "And ye shall find rest unto your souls;" and thus even from the yoke of service a song bursts.

So close is the connection between the law of God and its rewards, between godly service and singing, that there is music in the Cross. It is now hardly so much a symbol of sacrifice and suffering as of hope and peace. Christ himself sung the Passover hymn, when he was about to bear the curse of the law for our sins, just passing out of the light of the Father's love into the awful darkness of Gethsemane; and in sweet accordance with his example and his spirit is a stanza of a hymn which, more than almost any other among the gems of recent sacred poetry, has thrilled the hearts of Christians:

"Nearer, my God, to thee—
Nearer to thee:
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me!
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee—
Nearer to thee!"

Another beautiful hymn has burst, as it were, from the very bosom of the law of sacrifice, written by one who was called to meet that trial of faith and obedience from which the young ruler shrunk away in sadness and fear:

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shalt be:
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hoped, or known,
Yet how rich is my condition!
God and heaven are still my own!'

Thus, even in the saddest days of a godly soul, the statutes of our Sovereign and Saviour become songs in the house of our pilgrimage.

The subject inculcates a habit of religious cheerfulness. The language of David in the text, "Thy statutes have been my songs," clearly intimates that such were the habitual exercises of his mind. To the same purport are the words, "I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies as much as in all riches. Thy testi-

monies are my delight." No man whose memoirs are recorded by the pen of inspiration lived a more checkered life than David. No man passed through keener trials, or was guilty of more flagrant offences. Yet through all the vicissitudes of his fortunes, and all the varied emotions of a man of great natural genius, of mighty passions, and clear conscience, he makes manifest the fact that his soul revolved around the law of his God. His sins were exceptions to the tenor of his life, eddies to the stream, not the broad, sweeping current of his soul; and his songs of the statutes would break out of his deepest melancholy in trouble, and his most humble repentance for his crimes. The same spirit is evidently recommended to us by the example of Christ. We do, indeed, call him "the man of sorrows." It is because of the sorrowful things that came upon him, not because he was of a melancholy disposition. The Gospel rather gives us the impression that he preserved a serene and perpetual enjoyment. It was his meat to do the will of the Father. He rejoiced over the mystery of Divine Providence. Calvary, rising but a few steps before, did not silence his hymn.

Paul has inculcated cheerfulness as an habitual duty. "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, rejoice." He confirmed his instruction by his example, when with Silas in the prison he prayed and sang praises to God. The very spirit of David's psalms bursting forth at midnight heralded the power of God, marching with steps that shook the earth to the deliverance of his servants.

Such facts in their essential qualities are not confined to sacred history. They mark the privileges of all saints. The springs of such peace and joyfulness are still flowing. All whose life is hid with Christ in God may drink of the living streams. I have seen aged Christians, and young Christians, too, in sickness, and poverty, and near to death, whose thoughts were peace and whose words breathed the spirit of a song. No doubt, you might visit some whose words of patience, faith, and love are suited to cheer your spirits like a hymn of praise. To talk with them under the shadows of affliction is to have your own hearts exhilarated in view of the dark prospects of suffering and death, as by a sacred song.

"The saints ought to worry less and sing more." God "giveth songs in the night." Not only the promises but his statutes should break our melancholy and our silence with melody and chorus of sacred cheer.

Travellers enliven tedious journeys by cheerful singing, and even the weary beasts take new animation. How much more should Christians follow the apostle, "speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

"Sing, ye redeemèd of the Lord,
Your great Deliverer sing;
Pilgrims for Zion's city bound,
Be joyful in your King!"

The world has the impression that very good Christians are very gloomy men and women. It ought not to be so. Is there a want of the singing cheerfulness expressed in the text? Are Christians even more melancholy and complaining under the worries of life than others? If so, it should lead to the inquiry, Is not the piety defective? The cause is not in the Gospel; it is not in the commandments, even those that are severest; it is not in the nature of piety. It is through some misapplication of the truth, or some failure to apply it, or some perverse habit, or some unhappy temperament, and it should be corrected.

And where should the correction be sought? Not in worldly pleasures; beware of the enticement. Christian cheerfulness is not levity. No doubt here is one cause of melancholy and fear on the part of many professors. Too much association with the world—too much seeking even of innocent enjoyment, will destroy the glad sense of "liberty" which comes from "seeking the precepts," and silence the songs of godly obedience.

The alternative is obvious. To correct the injurious impression of the world, Christians must rise to a higher plane of spiritual life, and breathe a purer air from the heavenly hills. Their piety must pass from penitence weeping at the cross, to cheerful zeal, active services, and exhilarating hopes in the promises and rewards of the Gospel. There must be meditation on the statutes, and that delight in obedience which comes of faith and love. Then above the groaning wheels of our worldly burdens and cares will be heard the clear swelling chorus of songs in the house of our pilgrimage.

A complete and faithful use of this subject requires another observation. The language of the text is not the language of the world. We do not hear it in the dialect of irreligious men. It makes manifest a sharp discrimination between them and the spirit of David. To them the statutes of God are anything but songs in the house of their pilgrimage. Their songs along the paths of labor and in the halls of pleasure are anything but the statutes of Jehovah. To the wicked the law is an object of dread. There is always a deep though often slumbering sense of ill-desert and fear in view of its holy claims; and sometimes, when it powerfully gives knowledge of sin, it excites anguish of conviction, and the sighs and groans of a broken spirit break from the lips.

It is, then, a great question which I am about to ask, for it involves that on which salvation turns: Can we all, with the understanding and the heart, unite in the songs of the statutes? If there are no songs for us in the law of our God, but warning,

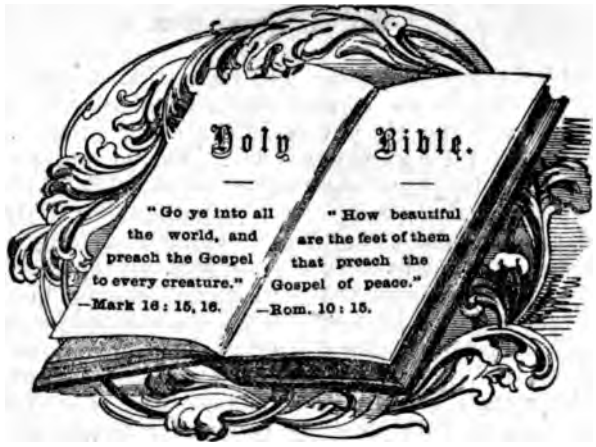
and fear, and cries of alarm or despair, what shall our end be? Oh, what solemn contrasts rise before our eyes! A wicked life may have, at the beginning, its singing and laughing and shouting, its mirth and revelry, and the saint-like David may be the song of the drunkards; but bitter experience repeats the solemn words of the Scripture, always becoming history. "And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say: How have I hated instruction and despised reproof." What multitudes begin with ribald melodies and hilarious contempt and transgression of Jehovah's commands, and end with agony and remorse!

But begin with obedience and go on with fidelity; the burdens of duty will become light, the yoke and cross of Christ easy to bear; songs will break forth in the house of your pilgrimage, and, at the end, grow sweeter with a conqueror's joy in the face of death, leaving on the ravished ear of friends, who linger after you on the shores of time, the prelude of the everlasting chorus of the redeemed.

It is related that, on the night after the desperate battle of Fort Donelson, a wounded soldier broke the silence of the bloody field with a sacred hymn. Another took up the strain, and then another; and thus they sung the night away, or sung themselves into heaven. Those soldiers must have loved the statutes before.

And who among us, sinners of this world, can thus sing on our way, and sing ourselves into heaven? Not those who are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Not those whose songs are learned in "the seat of the scornful." Not those whose religion is only a sentiment—a cold moonlight harmony with material nature; but those who in true repentance turn to God, and thus harmonize their own mind and heart and will with his precepts; those who receive the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood cleanseth from sin, through whom having received the atonement we joy in God; those who, having the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, say, Abba, Father, and are followers of God as dear children.

Children of time, mortals and yet immortals on this stage of probation, so dazzling with false light, so resounding with sinful mirth, beware that you do not change all this for the wailings of the lost; seek the blessedness of "the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord;" find songs in the statutes, victory and exultation in the cross, and you will have assurance that hereafter in the city that hath foundations you will unite with the multitude which no man can number, who stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palms in their hands, saying: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."


Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."
—Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."
—Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON XXV.

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THE SIMPLICITY THAT IS IN CHRIST.

"But I fear lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtility, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
2 Cor. ii: 3.

The terms Christ and Christian discipleship import so much that the mind is often bewildered in the attempt to grasp the fullness of their meaning. When one has for a time been surveying and attempting to measure the scope, power, and grandeur of the Christian system, he may find it difficult to associate with it the idea of simplicity. Such a vast body of truth and such a world of practical details are thrown upon his thought that he may despair of gathering up and holding in his ready comprehension the grand idea of the system. But this difficulty arises from the want of the right method in contemplating it rather than from its vastness and the multiplicity of its details, from overlooking the fact that it is a *system* instead of an aggregate of disjointed particulars. It is common to suppose that whatever is simple must be little, and that what is great must

be difficult of comprehension. The reputation of some men for genius rests on the air of mysterious profundity which they contrive to throw over the poverty of their conceptions, or which the confusion of their ideas generates. Turbid waters may be shallow, and yet we cannot see to the bottom, while clear waters may be deeper, and we can see to the bottom distinctly. It is recorded as a singular triumph of learning and oratory that a distinguished speaker handled certain difficult topics with such simplicity and perspicuity that a plain man among his hearers declared that he could have said the same things himself, when in fact not one in ten thousand could possibly have done it.

It is man's trick to magnify his littleness, but God's wisdom to simplify his greatness. And if we follow the right method of observation we may discover the confused littleness of the one and the plain greatness of the other. He who undertakes to go through the details of any one of God's great works without a knowledge of the principles which arrange them in classes and bind them in harmonious order, will find himself overwhelmed by their variety and multitude. But he, who has mastered the principles of its construction and operation, can go from beginning to end with the most delightful clearness of perception and sense of order and beauty. There is really no confusion in his works, though some of them are so vast that we cannot overtake their limits. And our position is so infelicitous or our method of observation is so bad with respect to others that we may behold only confusion in them, when in fact the utmost simplicity and regularity pervade them.

The right position and the single eye will give us a deep insight, a satisfactory view of the Christian system, vast as it is in the compass of its facts, doctrines and precepts. What we want for the relief of our thoughts, the repose of our spirits, and the guidance of our conduct, is to get hold of the central principles, the simple lines of truth and love, which run through it all. If we get fast hold of these, get them lodged within us as the directors of thought, we may carry on our studies to any extent with gratifying success. And if they are made vital to us by a true faith in them the details of practical life will easily fall into their proper places.

And these principles are very simple in their nature though very comprehensive in their application. It is in the world of grace as in the world of nature, one great law holds countless objects under its power, operating upon them all in the same manner, though with some diversity of effect owing to their different natures, positions and circumstances. Gravitation acts in the same manner upon all the members of the solar system and upon the myriad objects on the earth, upon the former to keep them steady in their orbits, upon the latter to bind them

securely upon the earth's surface. Now if we knew nothing about this principle or force in nature, and were pointed to the planets and their satellites, and were asked to keep each of them in its proper place, and then were directed to the countless objects on the earth's surface, objects animate as well as inanimate, and were required to fix each of these there so that those which have no occasion for motion should be motionless, and those which must grow upward may rise up and be held up in security, and as that thing which must move, may lift themselves from the ground, pass easily over it, and yet be kept close to it, we should be at our wits' end. What arm can bind and move so many and such diverse objects? What hosts of mighty agents can suffice for it? But see with what simplicity God has arranged this whole thing. The one force of gravitation goes far toward accomplishing it. Life is introduced into certain things, working in each after its kind, and so their end is secured. In the moving creatures intelligence of a higher or lower order is lodged, and thus, in conformity with the law of gravitation and the living principle, motion is accomplished. We get into the heart, come to an intelligent comprehension of this system of nature by seizing upon these central principles, so simple in their nature, so far reaching and effective in their operations.

Now there is a similar simplicity in the economy of grace. One great and glorious object is the centre of this system, and from him goes out a moral force to attract and bind rational creatures to him. That force is Love. And in order to adapt it to the specific purpose of recovering lost men it has been manifested in a peculiar form. "God is love," and "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." This grand power for the regulation of the moral system, for the recovery of the lost and the preservation of the redeemed, is symbolized by one word, Christ. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness." And what is Christ? Incarnate love, the embodiment of the great principles of truth and grace, a person human in faculties and sympathies, divine in nature, excellence and prerogatives, a person of great simplicity in feeling, speech and manner of life, a person very easy to understand in what he did, and the end for which he came into the world, a person set before us with great distinctness in the record, which God has given of his Son. The life, the power, the glory of the Christian system centre in him. And if we would feel that power, and be partakers of that life we must keep fast hold of him in his simplicity.

Here we must guard against three errors: one of overlooking the *completely* human character in which he is set before us by the evangelists; another that of attempting a curious analysis of his twofold nature, and a third that of losing sight of him in our attention to the doctrines he taught, or those which others

have taught concerning him. We want Christ himself before us in the fullness of his personality, a real Being endowed with life, intelligence, sensibilities, affections and energies, as near as may be, such as he was when he tabernacled in the flesh.

Turning then to the record we behold a man, the very man, whom of all we should most wish to see, the perfect man. We see indeed a halo of divine brightness around him, but he is not on this account any the less distinctly human. He ought to be to us just as real, and as intensely human, all faults and frailties excepted, as any character of history, or any person whom we have not looked upon with our bodily eyes. The evangelists in their portrayal have not sketched for us his bodily features, but they have told us that he has a body like ours, and, what is still better that he has taken it up with him into the heavenly world, changed no doubt, as ours must be, so as to comport with the pecularities of that world, and yet a human body glorified. So then he is for us now very much the same as he was to the disciples when he sojourned here below, not indeed visible, but just on the other side of the veil within speaking distance. A cloud has received him out of our sight. We cannot in our mortal form come within the vail "whither the forerunner is for us entered even Jesus made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedek," but we can come to it. As the penitent at the Romish confessional comes to a partition to speak in the ear of a priest on the other side, so may every sinner come to the veil, which divides between the visible and the invisible, and speak to the real living Christ, our great high priest within. And what we thus speak He hears, and to it makes answer by sending us to his recorded words, and by his spirit speaking in us. While therefore we believe there is one God, a pure spirit, let us also hold fast to the "one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

A very distinguished church historian gives it as his judgment that the worship of the Virgin Mary and other saints, in the Latin church owes its rise and prevalence very much to the overshadowing of Christ's humanity, which resulted from the intense re-action against the Arian heresy, a re-action whose highest formal and authoritative expression is found in the Nicene creed. His words are these :* "The more absolute deification, if it may be so said, of Christ; the forgetfulness of his humanity, induced by his investment in more remote and awful Godhead, created a want of some more kindred and familiar object of adoration. The worship of the intermediate saints admitted that of the Virgin as its least dangerous, most affecting most consolatory part." It is not by making Christ so exclu-

* Milman's Latin Christianity, Vol. I, p. 205.

sively divine that he cannot be human, nor by making him so entirely human that he cannot be divine, that the end of his mission and our needs are most adequately met, but by holding the simple truth on both sides. He is true man and true God, as truly man as God, as truly God as man, and therefore for us eternal life.

And this brings us to the second error named, *the attempt to make a nice analysis of his wonderful nature.* Here is a field in which a speculative curiosity may find much to stimulate its search. The place of Christ in the adorable Trinity, and the co-existence in one person of the two natures human and divine, have furnished some of the most attractive as well as the most difficult problems, which have ever exercised the Christian mind and heart. Reverently pondered they may be serviceable both for mental and spiritual discipline. But the danger is that the bounds of reverential inquiry will be overpassed, and that men impatient of mystery and aspiring to grasp the essence, gauge the capacity, and determine the interior contents and relations of the Godhead, will intrude into things not seen being vainly puffed up by the fleshly mind, and that as a practical consequence they will not to any purpose hold the head, which is Christ.

Philosophy has a wonderful alarm for some men, and as they are never content so long as they see an unsolved problem confronting it, whether pertaining to the natural or the supernatural; the human or the divine, or some vital connection between them. And this spirit may be carried so far that faith, believing, shall be accounted the foolishness of stupidity, and knowledge or the attempt to win it at all hazards the chief good and glory of men. And yet man need not go beyond himself to find problems, which defy his closest scrutiny, his profoundest and most protracted study. The origin of the soul will confound his philosophy for ever. Its connection with the living principle and the bodily frame will baffle his keenest analysis. And yet as a practical matter with what simplicity and harmony do soul and body preserve their relations, and perform their functions? A man is an object easily cognizable, and put to his appropriate use. So Christ is a simple and practical verity for those who wish to make such use of him as they have real occasion for. The unsounded depths into which his nature runs down, and the impossibility of plunging to the bottom of them for scientific research and satisfaction, do not at all lie in the way of the man, who, as a lost sinner, feels his need of an almighty Saviour. God manifest in the flesh to take away iniquity, attracts and satisfies his spirit. And it is just as rational for a man to say that he will have nothing to do with his fellow-man until he has solved all the metaphysical problems presented by his complex nature, as for him to say that he will have nothing to do with Christ

until he has sounded the depths of Godhead, uncovered the mystery of the Trinity, and discerned the point of contact, and the mode of interaction between the human and the divine in him.

No studies of this philosophical kind directed to Christ should ever be allowed to divert the mind from the simple individuality, the one, living, consistent and effective personality, in which he stands before us on the pages of inspiration as he stood before the eyes of his cotemporaries. When speculation only bewilders by withdrawing the attention from the simplicity of Christ to fix it on the unrevealed contents and modes of his being, it transcends its office, gets to itself no honor, does man no good, and brings to God no glory. A better use of our faculties is it to strive for an adequate comprehension of that in him, which is at once so simple in its nature that a child can clearly understand it, and so exalted in its purpose, so vast in its extent and so blessed in its efficacy that men and angels may try all their powers, and spend all their time in the endeavor to grasp its full significance with just this result, a feeling of profound wonder at what they see and a settled conviction, that they have only just begun to learn and enjoy the riches of his grace and glory manifested in the work of redeeming love.

The third error to be guarded against is *that of overlooking Christ himself in our attention to his sayings or the dogmas which men have framed concerning him.* It was never his design to put men in possession of a body of truth independent of his person or spirit. So close and vital is his connection with the truth which he taught that he said, "I am the truth." With other men it is not so. When they have imparted to us their ideas we can dispense with them. Their presence may be most agreeable, but it is not essential. The truth which they put into our possession is not so rooted in their personality that it will suffer materially by their removal.

But Christ is the vital source and centre of the doctrines which he taught. All that is said by him, and about him in the Scriptures has this for its end, to bring men to him, into personal and vital relations with him.

Now it is quite possible for men to gather the materials furnished by him as well as the prophets, who went before, and the apostles, who followed after, and to employ their mechanical skill in constructing a theological system, which shall be a model of scriptural learning, exegetical wisdom, logical precision, and rhetorical grace—a very goodly structure indeed—and yet Christ may appear in it only as the central figure giving verity, coherence and symmetry to the whole, which shall be admirable as an object of thought, but dead as the pages on which he is portrayed. Let us by all means have a systematic theology, one richly christological in theory, arrangement and details, but

at the same time let it be imbued with the spirit, instinct with the life of Christ. Let it not only be built upon him, but also rooted in him; let it grow out of him and partake of his fulness in every member. Let it be so pervaded by his presence that whoever comes into contact with it shall be made to feel that it is more than truth, even the robe and instrument, the manifestation and hiding-place of truth's great author and king. We want the truth about Christ, and the whole truth so far as it has been revealed, but we also want Christ in the truth. He must be to us more than a choice theological term, more than the groundwork of a true religious creed, more than the corner-stone of a moral system, more than a leading character in history. He must be to us, what he is in fact, the enthroned Mediator, the great High Priest, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, the present, observing, guiding and sustaining Friend, Helper, Saviour and God. Clear above all the shoutings of theological warriors and the noise of theological craftsmen rises the voice of Christ, summoning his disciples to urge forward his cause and kingdom, and cheering them by this affirmation, not of abstract doctrine, but of living fact, "Lo I am with you alway even to the end of the world." Let us be as skillful in the word as we may, but let us not amid terms and doctrines and jointings of bodies of divinity, lose sight of Christ himself. It is to be feared that many a man in his serious ponderings upon the *subject* of religion, forget to worship God or even to lift up his thoughts towards him. And yet without a personal God religion is nothing. Much study is likewise expended upon the wide field of Christian doctrine without a thought of meeting, embracing, and serving Christ, without whom that field is likely to be simply a theatre for barren speculation. I say barren speculation, because unless vital relations with him are established, even Christian knowledge is of little account. The intellect may indeed be better furnished, and some good moral impression be secured, but the soul will not be saved. And if a quickening, spiritual virtue does not go out of him, and enter into the soul to raise it from the death of sin to newness of life, it is probable that the intellectual treasures of Christianity will soon be forgotten. Let true believers in Christ, his spiritual offspring, cease from among men, and how long would any just and adequate views of Christian doctrine be retained among them? The philosophic and ethical interest of men in this system of truth apart from its regenerating and sanctifying power, would not probably keep it long in esteem, or even before the thought of mankind. A Christianity without the real Christ, the true, living, present Person is at best little more than a name. It is liable to lose little by little its distinctive character, and in the end even the name itself.

There is a manifest disposition to substitute what is thought to be an improved system of ethical instruction in the place of the Gospel; to treat this as at least an imperfect thing and fit only for an earlier and less intelligent age of the world; to bring in new ideas, which are judged to be of more consequence to this generation. This tendency is to be met by confronting those in whom it appears with Christ himself even more than by holding up his doctrines against theirs. Many who have little respect for any dead man's opinions, shrink from entering the list against a living man and a living God. Bring Christ in his living personality upon the stage with the knowledge to read man's thoughts, the power to kill and to make alive, and the virtue on which even malignity by its basest arts can cast no abiding stain, and you will hardly find a man who will venture to call himself his peer not to say his superior. To all who would reform our ethics or our theology, who boast of their improvements, their progress, their more rational views or their higher revelations, we say give us a better than Christ, show yourselves more pure in spirit, more faultless in life, more efficient in work, more genially interested in the welfare of men, more closely in alliance with God, more heavenly in affection, more comprehensive in wisdom, more mighty in power. Go do in the world the work which he has accomplished, purging away its uncleanness, alleviating its miseries, lightening its burdens, drying its tears, regenerating its life, perfecting its character, and establishing its hopes. Go do this and then we will listen to your claims, then we will sit at your feet. But until you do this we must hold your pretensions in abeyance. We will abide in the faith of Christ and look diligently for his appearing. We will cling to him devoutly, believing that "without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, believed on in the world, received up into glory." As we look upward in simple faith we "see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

We turn now from that simplicity of view, which we are to hold concerning Christ, to look at the simplicity of purpose and action, which we should maintain with reference to him. From what has been said it appears that the Christian life, on the human side, proceeds on clear and intelligible principles, not in some mysterious fashion, which much labor is requisite to comprehend. This life has to do primarily with two persons, the man who lives and Christ in, for, by and to whom he lives. Christian action is such as man ought to observe toward so great, so pure, so benevolent a person. There is here no occasion for casuistry to settle nice questions of conscience, none for mental acumen to discern nice shades of difference in doctrinal state-

ments, none for the reach of thought to understand all mysteries. What is wanted is a clear recognition of Christian personality, attributes, powers, prerogatives and offices, a clear view of our own state as sinners, and then the disposition to treat him as his excellence and offices, and our guilt and needs require. The active part of this matter is just as simple as our ordinary intercourse with our fellow-men. If you have a kind and benevolent neighbor and you are in want, you know how to go and ask him for what you desire. If you have kind and affectionate parents you know what it is to confide in their faithfulness and do their bidding. If you are sick you know that the physician is the proper person to be sent for, whether you understand the nature of your malady or not. You know how man ought to bear himself toward his fellow-man in every station. Now on this familiar personal basis the concerns of the soul are to be adjusted. It is not some recondite philosophy, some complex system of doctrines hard to be understood, which we are to toil over, if perchance we may get the mastery of it. How much strength has been spent fruitlessly by anxious sinners under this idea, straining every faculty to *understand* what they suppose is very difficult of comprehension, looking most eagerly for—they know not what—but something which they suppose they ought to see, and all the time overlooking Christ. They perhaps take up the subject of regeneration, and strive to pry into its mysteries, to get a distinct idea of the whole process, under the impression that this is essential to the beginning of a Christian life. But what did Christ say to Nicodemus when he was in darkness on this very subject? "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." But when he called men to be his disciples what did he say? "Follow me"—two words and as plain as any in the language. Is there any mystery in being a follower of Christ? The first step is to come to him with a godly sorrow for sin to be washed and pardoned. The second is to devote ourselves to his service. And the third is to confide in him for everything which he has promised to give and do. All this is to be done under the firm persuasion that he is really present at our side, although invisible, and ready to be a party in the transaction, understanding the outgoing of our desires, marking our purposes, accepting our consecration, and justifying our confidence.

Are you a lost sinner? Are you ready to confess the guilt and the helplessness? He is an almighty Saviour. Do you really wish to be saved? He is not less desirous of saving you. Are you oppressed with the sense of your sins? He is the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. Do you wish to be for-

given? "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." Do you sigh for rest, for inward tranquility? He says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Do you wish to rest without performing the service which he requires? You cannot have it thus, for he adds, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls." We must not only learn what Jesus teaches, but also to do as he did, to bear the yoke after his manner. He meekly bore that, which his father laid upon him, and it was heavy. But of his he says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." You cannot be his disciple unless you walk in his steps. Thinking about him or his words, no matter how seriously or constantly, is not all that is necessary to the keeping of his commandments. Indeed this may be without doing his will at all. You must form the *definite purpose* to be a Christian, *i.e.*, Christ's man or follower. And this purpose is a very simple one in its nature, although it has a world of meaning, and brings a host of duties and labors in its train. These, however, cannot all be brought before the mind, when it is urged to decide for Christ. Nor is it wise to distract the attention by turning it to a multiplicity of details while this question of choice is before it. Think not whether you can do such and such and so many things in order to win eternal life, but whether you will put yourself into that relation toward Jesus Christ, which he requires. Will you be his servant, his faithful friend? You cannot decide intelligently about the details of service until you have made choice of Christ from a deep sense of his excellence and with a true apprehension of his mission. When this choice is made, when he is acknowledged, when the stand is taken and the heart is given to Christ, it will be easy to do many things, which before appeared repulsive or impossible. Is Christ worthy of your love and obedience? Then make up your mind at once to follow him. Then let him lead you where he will. You may be sure that it will be for your credit and welfare to go after him. Be this your simple and unfaltering purpose. Do not overlook the single point of deciding for Christ.

To *confide* in him is a simple thing. It is not to be compassed by hard study and great efforts. But it comes rather from the discovery of his sufficiency and grace. It is an affectionate leaning upon his bosom not an arduous climbing up to him. These two things, purpose and trust are the substance of that inspired counsel, which should never be forgotten. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." This faith, so simple in its nature, so closely akin to the confiding love and ready obedience of the little child, is one of the mightiest forces ever

lodged in the human soul. It makes life sublime, death easy, and eternity glorious.

To set the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ always before us and steadily follow him, here is the secret of a true Christian life. Subjects, and doctrines, and duties, and ordinances, important as they are, must not interfere with a simple, steady gaze upon the face of Christ, and a simple hearted consecration to him. These cannot save us. They cannot even bless us, to any valuable purpose, except as they bring and bind us in simplicity of purpose and confidence to him. He is without guile, true, transparent in all his dealings with us. We must strive to be so in all our dealings with him. He is an affectionate friend to us. We must be so to him. He is mindful of our wants. We must be mindful of his wishes. We must remember who and what he is, and bear ourselves ever toward him with reverence for his person, submission to his pleasure, confidence in his love, and zeal for his honor. For purity and vigor of life as well as truth of doctrine we must keep our eyes steadily on *one object*—God's Anointed, Prophet, Priest and King, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever."

SERMON XXVI.

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ON THE DEATH OF A MOTHER.

"I BEHAVED myself as though he had been my friend or brother: *I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*."—PSALM 35 : 14.

THE text is part of a description of the unreasonable wickedness of those who were persecuting the psalmist. So far from giving them any occasion for their wrong doing towards him, he had showed them the greatest kindness. His sympathy in their affliction had been perfect. This he expresses in a beautiful climax. He had mourned with them as for his friend, and not only so but as for his own brother, and not only so, but as for his own mother. He thus shows that in his estimation, or rather in that of the Holy Spirit, by whose inspiration he wrote, the death of a mother calls for a peculiar, most sacred grief, such as no other bereavement occasions. No thoughtful man of ordinary intelligence and sensibility, can look upon the face of his mother,

cold in death, without such emotions and reflections as nothing else ever has produced or ever will.

The text refers particularly to the emotions of a *man:* not of a child, but of one come to maturity; not of a daughter, whose sympathy with a mother might be supposed to impart especial tenderness to her sorrow, but of a son, whose out-door life and harsh intercourse with the world might be supposed to have hardened him against tender susceptibilities.

Though the field of thought thus presented may seem at first sight rather limited, it will reward careful examination and illustrate and enforce many lessons of duty.

The death of a true mother is a great event in the life of any one. It can occur but once in a life-time. When it takes place in childhood, it is a sore calamity. Motherless little children are usually more than half orphans. A father can never supply a mother's place; seldom can any one else but very imperfectly. When a mother's death occurs after her children have reached maturity, and after she has fulfilled the longest period allotted to human life and been gathered to her eternal home, as a shock of corn fully ripe, into the granary of the Lord, then, though there are no tears to be shed for any loss which she has sustained; though there may be only grateful joy that she is relieved from pain and infirmity, and sleeps in Jesus, yet there are ties severed and memories stirred which awaken deep and sad emotions.

I. *A mother's death reminds us most strongly of the peculiar blessings conferred by God through the maternal relation.* Though filial duty is not divided in the fifth commandment, and obedience and honor are alike required for both parents, yet in some respects there is a difference in the benefits which children derive from each, and a difference in the kind and degree of influence which each exerts and in the manner of exerting it. A father's love acts in a sphere somewhat different from that of a mother's love. A father's care moves upon a circle exterior to that on which a mother's moves. His is general, hers particular and minute. Our lives begin with a mother's sufferings, and are continued by a nurture involving constant care and watchfulness and self-sacrifice, which nothing but a mother's love can prompt and sustain. As the love of God to man springs, not from any excellence in man, but from his own benevolence, so a mother's love springs not from any manifestation of good in her child, but from her own nature. She begins to love her child before it displays anything lovely. Her affection increases in spite of the development of what is unamiable: she loves without any reference to benefits which she expects to receive: she loves in proportion to the care and trial which she expends: she loves even when her children grow up in wickedness, and by ingratitude and cruelty and their own disgrace fill her days with sorrow.

A mother's influence is the first felt: it acts at the very fountain-head of life, it is gentle, tender, winning. Her smile greets the first dawn of intelligence: her voice is the first guide and encouragement to infant speech; her hand invites and sustains the first infant steps. Her expressions of displeasure first check the out-bursts of evil passions. From the pious mother's lips, her children first learn the name of Jesus, and the words of prayer; from her example and instruction they receive the elements of virtue. It is the mother's influence that usually lays the foundation of character, and determines what the life shall be.

Few mothers in a Christian community are so inefficient or so evil that their children do not owe them under God more than they can conceive. Never do we fairly begin to estimate the debt we owe our parents, till we have children of our own, and even after we know by experience much of the anxieties and cares of parents, we feel by a mother's grave that our sense of obligation for a mother's love, is but very imperfect:

> "O, if there be within the human heart
> A feeling holier than all else beside,
> It is the love that warms a mother's heart
> E'en for a sinning child—the only tie
> That death alone can sever, and is felt
> Till the last thrill of feeling is at rest."

God has shown peculiar honor to the maternal relation. He has indeed honored the paternal by teaching us to call Him, "Our Father." But when he would give us a most vivid illustration of his love to his people, he declares it to be stronger and more lasting than that of a mother. "Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" "Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee."

Moreover, God honored the maternal relation by making it the means of the union between the divine and human natures in the glorious plan of redemption, so that virtually through this relation, flow the riches of the mercy and grace of God to man. Christ Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was born of a human mother, and nurtured by her care. To her he yielded honor and obedience, and even in his own agony on the cross when bearing the guilt of a lost world, he remembered that mother, and committed her to his beloved disciple, that she might have a son and a home.

Now let any man remember these facts at the grave of his Christian mother; let him feel that he lives because her life was infused into his own being, and because her unceasing love watched over his infancy; that he owes whatever of excellence he may possess very much or wholly to her influence over his childhood; that she was the friend that sympathized with his early sorrows and joys, that her approbation encouraged all his

early endeavors after good, that her firm yet gentle discipline restrained him from the ways of evil, that her love bore with his youthful waywardness, that her presence made home a blessed refuge in sickness and sorrow, that her eye and heart have followed him through all the changes of his manhood with an interest deeper than that of all the world beside, that he is probably indebted to her prayers in an unknown and unknowable degree for all his prosperity, happiness and usefulness; let a man feel all this, as the earth hides his mother from his view, and a sense of loss will come over him unlike that occasioned by any other bereavement. He will feel that the angel—for it is scarce a figure of speech to call a mother an angel—commissioned by God to watch over him, has gone up to heaven, and that henceforth one sanctified influence will attend him no more. Peculiar grief will mingle with his gratitude while he exclaims, "O, God of love, I thank thee for my mother. Well may he sing:

"When all thy mercies, O my God
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise.

"Unnumbered comforts on my soul,
Thy tender care bestowed,
Before my infant heart conceived
From whom those comfoets flowed.

"When in the slippery paths of youth,
With heedless steps, I ran,
Thine arm, unseen, conveyed me safe
And led me up to man.

But as he sings he will feel that one chief instrumentality by which God wrought all this for him was his mother.

II. *The death of a mother occasions bitter recollections of filial disobedience and neglect.*—God has set our duty to our parents next to that which we owe to him. He bestows a peculiar blessing upon filial fidelity. "Honor thy father *and* thy mother," is *the* commandment with promise. Peculiar exhortations enforce this duty. "My son hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother; for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head and chains about thy neck." Peculiar threatenings are uttered against filial disobedience. "Cursed be he that setteth light by his father *or* his mother." "The eye that mocketh at his father and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out and the young eagles shall eat it."

These are vivid images of specific punishment, and vivid expressions of divine displeasure. These promises and threatnings have a more direct application to filial duty to a mother than duty to a father; for in the exercise of authority and influence, the mother stands nearer to God than the father. Parents stand

in the place of God to the child in its infancy, but the mother first exercises this delegated authority. Towards her, disobedience is usually first manifested, and whenever displayed after the child becomes capable of understanding, is greatly aggravated, because committed under the experience of her peculiar love, and of countless benefits received from her.

Precisely what was in the Psalmist's mind when he prayed "Remember not against me the sins of my youth," we are not informed; but who can stand by a mother's grave and not feel this petition particularly appropriate to himself? Happy is he who is not constrained to say, "Alas! that my youthful wickedness should have caused my mother so many tears, so much disappointment of her fond hopes, so many anxious fears. Happy is he who cannot remember many things which, when committed, seemed only trifling juvenile faults, but which now seem presumptuous sins, because sins against a mother—sins which stand preeminent in the black catalogue which proves depravity of heart. Happy is he who has no reason to believe that many of his failures and afflictions in life and many of his trials with his own children are judgments from God because of his disobedience to his mother. Perhaps many things apparently unaccountable may be thus explained.

Happy is he who has no reason to regret that he had not done more by a life of virtue and usefulness to honor and cheer his mother's declining years, and more by thoughtful and tender attention in her second childhood, to respond to the love, which blessed his infancy and youth. Happy is he who feels that his sins against his mother are blotted from the book of God's remembrance.

III. *The death of a mother breaks up the home of our early days, and makes us feel that we are only sojourners here.* Many and sacred are the associations of our early homes. The scenery amid which we began life is impressed upon the memory never to be erased. The dwelling in all its parts with all its surroundings, and all its occupants and occupations, is so associated with our first emotions of joy and sorrow that it can never be forgotten. There we learned to say, father, mother, brother, sister. There we began our acquisition of knowledge. There commenced our experience, our acquaintance with the world of persons and facts and feelings; but that which did more than all else, was a mother's presence and influence. Most tender are the memories which cluster around her. Through all her active life, a mother is the ministering angel of every true home. It is *her* sphere of effort, her field for achievement, her place of honor; she is the centre of the home circle. Whatever fame a woman may gain by taking a public part in the literature or business or benevolence of the world, is worse than useless if, to win it, she sacrificed her home influence and honor as a mother.

And even when a mother's busy days are over, and ceasing to minister, she needs to be ministered unto, still her influence remains. Where she is, is the home of her children. Though they have removed far away and gathered home circles for themselves, yet their best affections are strongly drawn to the home of their youth; and when they visit it they feel that they are yet children and live over again some of their happiest days, because they there experience a mother's presence. Herein lies the charm and the blessing of the home gatherings which in many families make the annual holidays, holy days indeed.

But when the mother is gone from the early home, especially if the father preceeded her to the tomb, it is home no longer. Everything external may remain as it was, loved kindred may abide there, pleasant scenes may be enjoyed there, but it is no longer home. They who have gone from it feel no longer the same rights and interests there. The home of childhood and youth has passed away for ever, and they turn to their own immediate homes, with the deepened feelings. The places which know us now will soon know us no more; here we have no abiding home. Hence I remark:

IV. *The death of a mother, especially of an aged mother, is adapted to make us sensible of our nearness to another world.* The removal of our parents brings us a generation nearer the grave. It places us in the foremost ranks of travelers to eternity. This is true in some degree whenever the aged are removed from our sight; it is peculiarly so, when an aged mother dies, and we can no longer say, we are children. Soon, even if we complete the allotted term of life, will our children bear our dust to its last resting place. Our best treasures have many of them gone before us to a better home. It remains for us to gird ourselves anew for the duties of life, that we may run with patience and fidelity and hope, what is left of the race set before us. The memory of a sainted mother is like a voice from heaven saying to us, "Be ye faithful unto death; the Lord is at hand."

The subject thus briefly presented suggests several practical appeals which I urge upon your attention.

1. I appeal to fathers. Remember what you owe *your* mothers, and teach your children, especially your sons, the deepest reverence for *their* mothers. Show them by line upon line how clearly and strongly God has expressed his will that in every family the mother shall be honored and obeyed equally with the father. Show them that their obligations to their mothers are enforced by more and stronger motives than their obligations to you. Show them that their future usefulness and happiness depend very much upon the manner in which they perform their duty to their mothers—that they cannot neglect this duty without running fearful risks. Never for a moment allow them to question

their mothers' authority. Teach them to hold it more sacred than your own. Thus will you do much to train them to true manliness, much towards bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; for piety should begin at home, and the boy who has learned to despise his mother has already gone far in hardening his heart against the claims of God. Thus will you do much towards securing for your sons the blessing and favor of God—much towards making them blessings to their generation and to their children—much to save them from sin and sorrow and remorse—much to throw around them the best earthly safe-guards. Allow them to throw off their mothers' authority, and their love for home is gone, its wholesome restraints are gone, its improving influences are gone; and they themselves are on the high road to ruin.

Fathers! as you love your children, as you would discharge your own duty to God, teach your children, by every means in your power, to love, honor and obey their mothers.

2. I appeal to mothers:

Mothers! Cherish a deep and constant sense of your own importance to your children, especially to your sons. Take the high and responsible position which God has assigned you, as your own, and strive, by his grace, to fill it. Remember that God has chosen to make the parental, and particularly the maternal relation, a chief instrumentality in extending the knowledge of his truth, and building up his church. Remember that Jesus calls you to be workers together with him in preparing jewels for his crown of glory. Strive therefore to illustrate the beauty and power of maternal character; assert and maintain your authority; make it lovely and winning.

Your difficulties and trials are great, but abundant help is offered for your time of need, and great will be your reward if you are faithful. Shrink not from your duty, for the consequences of your unfaithfulness will be terrible. "A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame;" terrible to you as well as to them. Attempt not your duty alone. The blessedness of bringing up children for God, to be workers in his earthly vineyard and heirs of his heavenly kingdom is inconceivable and eternal. The sorrow and woe of training them to be cumberers of the ground or bond slaves of Satan and heirs of perdition, who can imagine it? Let no spurious love or false tenderness lead you to indulgence or neglect which will surely prove fatal to your own peace and happiness as well as that of your children.

Remember that you cannot delegate to another the authority and influence which God has given you as mothers. If you try to do so, you will only rob and destroy yourselves and your children. Surely you would not have others take the rewards which belong to you. It is for you to say at the judgment, "Lord, here

am I and the children whom thou hast given me." What motives for personal piety press upon you!

Take heed to yourselves *and* to your children; to your instruction and influence and example; for by so doing you may save yourselves *and* your children who are as dear as your own souls. Perhaps you would be willing to die for them, but God only asks that you should live for them.

Let your children and children's children have the unspeakable satisfaction of tracing their genealogy to those who loved God. To be born of a child of God is a far higher honor than to be born of princes and nobles. The Christian poet, Cowper, thus expressed his thoughts as he looked upon the picture of his mother:

"My boast is, not that I derive my birth
From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth,
But higher far my proud pretensions rise
The son of parents passed into the skies.

Mothers, remember that God is a convenant keeping God, who engages with parents to bless their offspring. O, leave your children the great satisfaction of feeling when you are removed from them that you are at home in glory, leave them the hope of meeting you there as a strong motive to urge them to a life of piety.

3. I appeal to those who have mothers living, especially to sons in early life. I entreat you, each of you, as you value your well-being for time and eternity, study well, the will of God concerning your duty to your mothers, and strive to fulfill it. I say *strive* to fulfill it, because there are so many influences adverse to this duty that you need to make particular effort, or you will not succeed. Boys are apt to get the impression, that the first evidence of approaching manhood is given when a mother's authority is set at naught. Young men sometimes imagine that they prove their superiority by laughing at the anxieties of their mothers for them, and treating as contemptible all their moral and religious opinions and teachings. Alas! that any should begin life with such fearful mistakes.

My young friends! if you are unfaithful in duty to your mothers, you are unfaithful, not in little, but in *much;* you are wanting in the first elements of true manliness and morality, to say nothing of religion. Remember how carefully God enjoins filial duty, and how fearfully he curses even him who setteth light by his mother; and you cannot but see that such conduct is direct and high-handed rebellion against God. To break away from a true mother's control is to hurry along the pathway to destruction, it is to cast off the tender cords of God's restraining love, to reject his richest blessings. Young man, remember that no one can have your well-being more at heart than your mother.

Think it not unmanly, therefore, to yield to her authority, to honor her everywhere. Fly from any society where deference to your mother provokes a sneer or a taunt. Esteem him as your enemy who can even intimate that you had better disregard your mother's just wishes. He can never be a true man who contemns his mother. The truly great and honored among men have been distinguished for tender affection towards their mothers. Washington appears as truly great in his filial affection as in his generalship or statesmanship.

This was one of our Saviour's distinctions. His mother was infinitely inferior to him in wisdom and virtue, but he always honored her. Now, whatever faults your mother may have, they can never furnish you with any such reason for despising her authority, as Jesus of Nazareth had for setting himself above his mother. Do we not regard his subjection to her as one proof of his *perfect* manhood? Should you imitate his example would you be unmanly? Remember, that the principle, "What a man soweth that shall he also reap," applies to this subject as well as others. As the bitterest sorrow to a mother's heart is that caused by the ingratitude and wickedness of the son on whose virtue and love she hoped to lean in fond security when her strength failed, so the keenest remorse is that which attends the recollections, under the goadings of an awakened conscience, of a son undutiful to his mother.

My young friends, that you may never know such remorse, I beseech you cherish, honor, revere your mothers.

4. To those whose mothers have passed away. Many years may have gone since many of you looked upon the faces of your mothers for the last time, but even with you filial duty and privilege are not extinct. Cherish your mother's memory. Estimate the blessings you received through them, and give God thanks. Review your sins and unkindness towards them, and seek God's mercy. Go to your mothers' graves, to meditate and pray, perhaps to weep bitter tears; and then prove your regard and your penitence by so living that it may be evident that your mothers did not live in vain. So live that you may meet them in heaven. Be not among those whose mothers shall witness against them at the last day.

SERMON XXVII.*

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NATURE AND OFFICE OF SACRED MUSIC.

"SPEAKING to yourselves (one another) in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord."—EPHESIANS 5 : 19.

VERY early in history we find the invention of musical instruments and the use of the art of instrumental and vocal music in the service of religion. The temple and synagogue services were enlivened by the chanting or singing of sacred psalms. The Saviour sang with his disciples after the first celebration of the Supper. The early church treasured inspired psalmody and uninspired hymns as its most precious legacies, and employed them in all its private and public services. The church of all the centuries, has cherished this practice, as well in her dark days of persecution and sorrow, as in the times of favor and prosperity. A portion of religious service derived from such ancient custom, approved by the Saviour's example, cherished for centuries by the universal church, is certainly of sufficient interest and value to demand for itself a faithful consideration in the house of God from the pulpit as a teacher, and the people as learners. If we add to this the fact, attested by all experience, that sacred music well conducted may add greatly to the efficiency of divine service as a means of grace, and that when misdirected it may and does rob worship of its influence and preaching of its power, no apology is necessary for the introduction of the subject as a topic of preaching on the Lord's Day. We shall inquire,

WHAT IS THE OFFICE OF SACRED MUSIC IN OUR PUBLIC WORSHIP?

To answer this inquiry, we must learn, 1st, *What is the design of the public worship of God*, and 2d, *What contribution to this end is furnished by sacred music?*

I. The design of public worship may be learned from the word worship itself. Good etymologists are agreed that it is composed of the noun "*worth*" and the suffix "*ship*," forming

* Preached in the ordinary course of pulpit ministration.

worth-ship; contracted, "*worship.*" It is similar to the term, "lordship." As the title "your lordship" is addressed to one who sustains the dignity of a lord, so the title "your worship," is given to one who possesses recognized worth. The verb "to worship," accordingly signifies to ascribe worth. John describes an act of worship, when he represents the elders falling down before the throne and saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power." The prophet declares that in this act and this ascription "they worship him that liveth forever and ever."

To worship God is therefore to express to him affections inspired by apprehension and appreciation of his character. The law of this worship demands that it be spiritual and truthful. Jesus said, "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." The worshipper is to be filled with spiritual affections, and sincerely and truthfully express them to God in a suitable form.

The source of true worship therefore is a right apprehension of God's excellence. This arouses the appreciative affections, and sends them forth in natural expression to God. The preparation, which opens the source of spiritual worship, is meditation upon the character of God. He is revealed to us in his works and in his Word. In the things he has created he manifests his wisdom, skill, goodness, power, greatness. In providence he displays the same attributes, and causes them to appeal not only to our admiration but gratitude, since they are employed to preserve and bless us. In his Word he more fully displays his character. He manifests his new attributes of mercy, grace, and love. He reveals in Jesus Christ "the brightness of his glory." and "the express image of his person." All this revelation in the Word appeals to our personal interest and gratitude, for we are the subjects of the redemption, which it is its chief purpose to show forth to us, and accomplish in us.

By meditation upon these various manifestations of God to us, we appreciate the glory of his person, his interest in ourselves, the vast work he has accomplished for our salvation, and admiration, gratitude and love respond from our heart to the perceptions of our minds. We have spiritual affections, and whatever expressions may correctly embody them or show them forth will be truthful, we become spiritual worshippers, already "making melody in our hearts to the Lord." Without meditation upon God, therefore, true worship is impossible. It is a law of our nature that affections of the heart are results of perceptions of the mind. They are not spontaneous; they do not spring up at the command of the will. They are effected in us by objects presented to the mind. By these we are affected, our souls are filled with appropriate feelings. You stand before

a picture. Your eye sees colors, your mind perceives thoughts, ideas expressed by the pencil; you drink in the beauty, and at once the emotions that go forth to the beautiful well up from the soul. You listen to music. The ear hears sounds, the mind perceives concord, harmony, thought, feeling expressed; it appreciates the peculiar beauty of a new object of contemplation, and a new class of emotions respond.

The soul is in the presence of God. It sees no form, hears no voice, but by the revelation of him in his Word constructs for itself an idea of his glorious person and character, it dwells upon it until it is more and more distinct and vivid, and real, and near; then the deep fountain of feeling is broken up, and admiration, reverence, awe, and love profound, expand and elevate the soul.

Worship essentially consists of holy emotions inspired in the soul by the contemplation of God. Worship is complete when these emotions are expressed in the most natural and suitable form. When holy affections employ the body, the voice, or the instrument of music as channels through which they may flow forth to God, then is God worshipped "in spirit and in truth." The humblest efforts of the soul to express itself are acceptable to God. The most elaborate and artistic efforts of a congregation to make their service complete and imposing, if holy affections do not demand, and supply, and consecrate them all, will produce only a splendid falsehood, a brilliant mockery.

It is denied by some that the expression of feeling is necessary to worship. These maintain that the affections cherished in the heart are accepted by God without visible or audible expression. It will not be needful to dwell long upon the objection now stated. Your own instinct will sufficiently refute it.

1. There is in the constitution of our nature a necessity for the expression of emotion. We cannot subdue expression any more than we can subdue emotion. Our affections crave expression, if denied they will force it. Some natures may be less demonstrative than others, but only because a firmer will shuts down the gate upon the current of feeling. When we become most childlike, mature, mellow, in the perfection of our character, feeling will obey the wand of thought, and gush forth at its smiting. He lives behind a mask who does not carry a tell-tale face. He acts a part, who does not interpret his heart with his voice.

If, therefore, there were no divine authority for the expression of our feelings to God, there would be a presumption in favor of audible worship. God does not make a sin of what our nature demands of us. He will not chide us for weeping, when he has given us tears; for sighing, when he has given us breath; for singing, when he has tuned our voices.

2. Audible worship is enjoined. David called upon Israel "to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," and proclaimed the form of worship. "Call upon his name;" "sing unto him," "sing psalms, talk ye of all his wondrous works." This was not the ritual service, but the spiritual. Not alone at the temple was music employed, but at the synagogue, the church of Israel. Not alone at the temple was music a means of making impression upon the people, but it was employed at the synagogue to give the people an instrument of expression. It did not only speak to them in the ceremonial gathering, but by it they spake to God in the spiritual assembly.

Paul commands, "be filled with the spirit, speaking to each other in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts unto the Lord."

3. We have divine example. Jesus prayed audibly. He sang with his disciples, at the holy Supper.

4. We have example furnished by the apostles in their writings, and in the records of early church historians, and profane writers.

5. We have the continued example of the early church for centuries, and the unbroken observance of vocal worship by the universal church unto this day.

6. There is, however, a reason for audible worship that is alone decisive. Without audible prayer and praise there can be no social worship. Religion will be banished, whence no other good that God has conferred is banished, from all social relations. All devotion is solitary, secret. No matter whether the worshipper be in a crowded sanctuary or in a lonely closet, he is solitary in his worship. Is our religion thus to be cloistered? Can it be solitary? Is there no community of thought, feeling, labor, hope, in the Christian family? If there be, how can it be realized without some expression of mind to mind and heart to heart? There may as well be no brotherhood, no sanctuary, no Sabbath! In historical truth we affirm that it comes to this! Where to-day are the numbers who once attempted to cast a cheerless dumbness and isolation upon the church? They have gone to the only land of silence, the land of the dead, and their children are worshipping at the altars of the most ritualistic church in Protestant Christendom. True worship is spiritual emotion expressed to God in solitude, or expressed in concert by his people in the house of God.

II. *What part does music perform in this worship?* We have seen that worship is the expression to God of holy affections. Music is the highest form of emotional utterance, and therefore becomes a necessary instrument of worship. It is true that ordinary articulate language may be made to express deep feeling, as when the orator is aroused, and pours forth the tide of impassioned

words. But when the highest emotions inspire the soul it struggles for a peculiar form of utterance. It departs from prose and speaks in poetry, it leaves broken articulation, and swells forth the voice in the melody and rhythm of song. Even the orator unconsciously approaches the art of the singer. The voice is impelled into modulation, and melody, rhythm and cadence. The vocal characteristics of oratory are even represented by the very signs, the staff, and the notes, and the measures of music. But when feeling rises upon feeling it breaks over the short, sharply articulated sounds of common utterance, and swells forth in the prolonged, increasing and diminishing, tones of music. Feeling rises and subsides, and thrills, upon the rolling waves of sound.

All history will testify that as ordinary language has been the appropriate vehicle of thought, music has been the language of feeling. The child sings as naturally as it talks, it often sings before it can speak. Man everywhere has made for himself the art of song, however rude and imperfect. And in his times of rejoicing and gladness, and often in his sorrow and agony, it has eased his heart of emotions it would break in compressing. No small part of the history of man's inner life is the record of his poetry and music.

Religious emotion is the highest that fills the soul. Its inspiring source is the grandest, sublimest, the only perfect, the infinite object of contemplation. Religious feeling therefore demands the most expressive form of utterance. The worship which consists of the speaking forth to God of our highest and holiest affections, must have the service of song.

III. Social worship is the expression to God of common affections by united worshippers, and the utterance of feeling by one to another. The worshipper kindles devotion in his fellow-worshipper, and together they turn the united flame toward the throne of God. The voice of praise attunes the voice that is silent, and both communingly go up to heaven. Music affords the sole instrument of united expression of thought and feeling. The assembly may respond in a single word to prayer. They may read responsively the verses of the Scriptures. But for them to rise to the expression of high emotion in articulate language would turn worship into jargon, the sanctuary into Babel. In the flowing melody of song each voice may contribute its tones, and, sweetly blending and commingling, they flow along, rising to the majestic height of the chorus, or subsiding to the placid and quiet cadence of pathetic harmonies. Let enthusiasm destroy self command, and feeling burst all barriers, yet in the deep, broad channel of the vibrating air there is room for its swellings, and in its boisterous majesty there is no less beauty and grandeur than in its gentle flowing.

Since therefore sacred song furnishes the only instrument of common expression of religous feeling, it will always be cherished as a portion of social worship. God's people will continue to speak "to one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs."

Such being the contribution of sacred music to divine worship, the laws that must govern its use will be most obviously inferred.

1. It is necessary to remind you that previous preparation is needful to the proper employment of this part of worship. If you do not meditate upon God as he is revealed, your soul will be barren of holy affections. You will have nothing to express. If you sing you will be guilty of falsehood, shall I say it, of taking God's name in vain. How I tremble for those choirs who are gathered from the opera troupe, who come thoughtlessly into the house of God, converse during the reading of the Law and the Scripture, search for music during prayer, leave the sanctuary during sermon, and then rise to sing the most solemn words of praise to God, without a sacred thought or feeling. It is most grievous blasphemy. How can the church that tolerates such sacrilege expect God's grieved Spirit to remain in the place of pretended worship, and bless the proclamation of the word?

Equally improper is it for the people to rush thoughtlessly into the house of God, and sing carelessly his awful praises. It is your duty therefore my brethren to rise on the Lord's Day betimes, and give yourselves to such meditation as will hurry you to the sanctuary, saying, "I will enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise." You should come early into your place, sit quietly and prepare for a solemn act of spiritual and truthful communion with God. No indecent haste, no flurry of excitement should mar the flow of earnest thought and honest feeling to your Maker and Saviour. Be careful in Jehovah's presence; be truthful.

2. The psalms and hymns that we sing should express correct thought and true feeling, and we should use such of these as truthfully express our own sentiments and emotions. One of the most important duties of our church authorities, accordingly, is the provision for us of suitable psalms and hymns. They undertake to teach us what we should think and feel, what we ought to express to God. The models for our devotional exercises are found in God's Word. Our own opinion is that we should often sing the very words of our Bible—the psalms as they are tanslated for us in prose. All other psalms and hymns should be full of scriptural sentiment and evangelical affections. If our hymns faithfully represent true spiritual devotion, and we make preparation for worship, they will accord

with our feelings and furnish us with a welcome medium of praise. Now it is evident that if we worship God truthfully, with the sentiments of our own souls, we must be familiar with the hymns we sing. If one sings a hymn he has never read, he commits himself to the danger of singing what he neither believes nor feels. Imagine a professor of religion who never seeks his closet, carelessly opening his book to sing, the 119th Ps. 21st Pt. and coming to the 5th verse, telling God,

> "*Seven times a day* my prayers ascend,
> With mingled praises to the throne."

What a fearful thing it is solemnly to say to God,

> "If e'er my heart forget,
> Her welfare or her woe;
> Let every joy this heart forsake,
> And every grief o'erflow."

Suppose in our worldliness we have already ceased to yearn for the welfare of Zion, what an awful curse we are calling upon ourselves.

It follows from this point now illustrated, that it is a work of responsibility to select the hymns for a service. What discrimination and knowledge of the state of the church is needful to him who attempts to portion to God's people the language they shall address to him. He may not inflict his own moods upon a whole assembly. He must not put a lie in their mouths. To remedy the evil of untruthful singing, the hymn-book should be made a study. It ought to lie on the Bible and be read with the Bible. Its choicest selections should be committed to memory. Children should learn them while the memory is active and retentive. It would be a grand consummation if every hymn-book were useless, and a whole congregation could close their eyes in singing as in prayer, sending the undivided attention and undistracted heart up to God.

3. It follows from the nature of worship that sacred music should be simple and familiar. Operatic tricks and ornaments may be proper when God is absent, and people go to be listeners, not worshippers. If we are to send pure affections forth on the voice of song, as little effort to master the music as possible must be required. If we are laboring to follow the words and catch the melody, the whole attention will be confined to the instrument of worship, and no thought will be left for the service itself. Singing should be as free and spontaneous as possible, or it will become a merely artificial performance. Suppose a man should be called upon to construe his extemporaneous prayer into Latin as he prays, how much real petition would he lay before God? In like manner, how much does he express of praise and thanksgiving who is feeling his way through the mazes of an intricate harmony?

4. Singing should be participated by all the congregation of worshippers. It is their privilege, it is their duty to sing. God has given us voices. Not a human being that can talk but can sing. Not every one can become an artist, as not every talker can become an orator. But every one can be taught to sing so as to share in the praises of God's house. This I know from a most practical experience. Persons, not only without voice, but also without ability to distinguish a tone of one pitch, from a tone of another, have been trained to sing well, to lead choirs, and perform on the organ.

This universal gift God intended for universal employment. The day will come in the church, and Sunday-school is hastening it, when singing will be as natural to all as speaking. The nature of worship involves the right and duty of all worshippers to sing. Suppose a company met for the expressed purpose of declaring their respect and love for a distinguished person and a number should be silent, indifferent, turning their attention to some other object of interest, or criticising the style in which the rest pay their homage, what would be the inference as to their respect for the recipient of this testimonial of reverence and esteem?

What then can be thought of him who is a listener or a critic in God's house while he is worshipped? Is there a silent voice in heaven? The Psalmist cries, "Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord."

But it is objected, a congregation, singing old tunes, in a crude style, will offend delicate ears. Then let them be offended, we come to speak in the ears, not of men, but of God. If God is well-pleased we care not who is displeased. If any will seek other churches to hear concert music, they have benefitted us by removing out of our midst a grievous offence to the God whom we would have here always, whether they are here or not. But if any are so sensitive that they are unfortunately disturbed by their neighbor's less skillful singing, let them fill their ears with their own voices, or let the organist pull forth his diapasons and cover the defects of untrained voices. This I conceive to be one of the uses of the organ. It is abused when it is employed for exclusively choir performance. It was intended to flood the church with harmony and bear up all voices on its pervading swell. It may be objected, we will not hear the words of the hymn with a powerful organ. They will be heard if they are spoken. A small organ will more effectually cover the language of a hymn, than the largest that can be built. But the design is mainly that God shall hear. If a hymn is before you, you know what is sung and can feel the tide of emotion with which it is expressed.

5. We learn from this subject also the proper office of the

choir. It is not the office of the choir to add music to divine service as an embellishment. It would seem that a view so absurd could not be entertained. Yet it is practically held by many who are not conscious of its absurdity. They regard reading the Scriptures, prayer, preaching as the elements of the service. The music is intended to relieve the tediousness of the service, and enliven it. Such as hold this view do not scruple to attend church for the very purpose of hearing music, to select among churches one as a favorite resort on account of the character of its music. It is known that congregations hold out as an attraction to their church the style of music they cultivate. People organize their choirs, and conduct the music as an instrument for filling pews and providing means for the support of the church. There is even rivalry between choirs and churches in the preparation and performance of music. There could not be a more horrible perversion of sacred things. To turn the solemn words of our psalmody into unmeaning utterances is sufficiently sacrilegious. But to use addresses to God, entreaties to the sinner, as means of pleasing those who go to church as they go to a concert, and for the purpose of making a church the popular resort of paying pew-holders is blasphemy. No wonder God is so often absent from our sanctuaries when they are thus transformed into concert rooms. No wonder the preaching of the gospel is so powerless for good. Nor is it the office of the choir to make a devotional impression upon the assembly. This is the theory of the Romish church, and some imitators of Rome. They maintain that architecture must be imposing, the attitudes and robes of the priests suggestive, the liturgy impressive, the music moving and inspiring. The worshipper is wholly passive, not a partaker in the worship, but affected by it. He is supposed to say, not "how good it is to give thanks to the Lord," But, "how grandly these performers worship." We repudiate this whole theory. It is congenial only to the system that reads the Bible by proxy, and takes the wine at communion from the people. Worship is active not passive. It is not the receiving of impressions, but the making of expressions of affection to God. The choir are not therefore to seek as their aim the producing of effects however profound in the sensibilities of the few that can appreciate high art.

The high and holy office of the choir is to help God's people to speak his praises. As the minister leads them in prayer, so the choir should lead them in song. They stand between the company of worshippers and the throne of God, and lift up their voices to guide, sustain, harmonize the voices of the people. By securing this end, they cease to abuse and worthily magnify their office. Which affords them the nobler position, to cater for the gratification of an audience, or to lead the august

praises of God? Which has least in it of earth and most of heaven? Which is most consistent with the appropriate employment of their Sabbaths? Which most conduces to their growth in grace and preparation for a part among the choral ranks of heaven?

The church that demands anything else of the choir than this is a tempter to evil. The choir that consents to anything but this, yields to the degradation of its office.

It follows from what is now asserted that the choir must accommodate itself to the ability of the people, and also aim by the gradual introduction of new music to cultivate and educate the people in this part of worship. Let familiar tunes be sung, and let all the talents and skill of the choir be bent upon the proper rendering of them. Choirs forget that the merit of their singing does not depend upon the novelty of the tune, but upon the proper performance of it. A familiar harmony can be better sung than an unfamiliar. The mind is not so much detained in the reading, but goes freely forth in the execution. By such perfection of art exercised upon familiar music, the tasteful character that decency demands may be preserved to the service of song.

That it is practicable to introduce a combination of choir and congregational music as shall please the ear, and satisfy the artist, and yet secure the end of worship, is provided by the unanswerable logic of facts. In our sister city, one of the most original and finished organists of this country, has succeeded in producing these results. It would do your soul good to worship with him, and teach an important lesson, if you are skeptical upon this subject.

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THE PRAYER-MEETING.

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Luther's Faith.

It is faith which gives Luther this clearness of vision. "I have lately seen two miracles," he says, "the first as I was looking out of my window and saw the star in heaven and all that beautiful vaulted roof of God, and yet saw no pillars on which the Master builder had fixed this vault, yet the heaven fell not, but all that grand arch stood firm. Now there are some who search for such pillars and want to touch and grasp them, and since they cannot they wonder and tremble as if the heaven must certainly fall, for no other reason but because they cannot touch and grasp its pillars. If they could lay hold on those, think they, then the heaven would stand firm! The second miracle was,—I saw great clouds rolling over us, with such a ponderous weight that they might be compared to a great ocean, and yet I saw no foundation on which they rested or were based, nor any shore which kept them back; yet they fell not on us, but frowned on us with a stern countenance and fled. But when they had passed by, then shone forth both their foundation and our roof which had kept them back—the rainbow! Yet that was indeed a weak, thin, slight foundation and roof, which soon melted away into the clouds, and was more like a shadowy prism, such as we see through colored glass, than a strong and firm foundation; so that we might well distrust that feeble dyke which kept back that terrible weight of waters. Yet we found, in fact, that this unsubstantial prism could bear up the weight of waters, and that it guards us safely. But there are some who look rather at the thickness and massy weight of the waters and clouds, than at this thin, slight, narrow bow of promise. They would like to feel the strength of that shadowy, evanescent arch, and because they cannot do this, they are ever fearing that the clouds will bring back the deluge." — *The Schonberg-Cotta Family*

Preaching and Praying.

The nature of preaching as spiritual work—work not to be done without the corperation of the Spirit, acquaints us with the part *which prayer has in preparing for it.* Self-evidently, prayer, as a means, is required before every other, and is virtually at least, continued and ascendant in every other.

If a spiritual discourse is not a possible achievement of natural power, to attempt one independently of the aid of the Holy Spirit, were a plain absurdity; and since the Spirit is present to impart His aid, the attempt were impious, an insult to the infinite Spirit, as well as absurd. But not without intentional and conscious effort on the preacher's part directed to that end, is the power of the Spirit developed in congenial concurrence with his activity.

The divine does not concur with the human in this free and holy operation, but at the urgent and continued exertion of the human. May a man makes a sermon without conciously looking to the Spirit and seeking His assistance, when without doing this he cannot read the Scriptures; or do aught else as he should? It is an intuition of conscience that a preacher is required by the business of his vocation, to be, above others, a man of prayer. Is it not manifest that this, in truth, must be the main business with every preacher who really regards preaching as an impossibility, to man, without aid from above? He will, of course, give to the work study, invention, the closest application of his mind, the highest use of his talent, learning, culture; but in all, and more than all, he will be praying in spirit, with all prayer and supplication, that the Holy Spirit may not cease to work mightily within him, illuminating, sanctifying, strengthing, directing the exercise of his faculties until he has completed his preparation. — *Rev. T. H. Skinner, D.D.*

Prayer Answered.

In one of the cottage houses of a densly peopled village in the West Riding of Yorkshire, about ninteen years ago, a pious woman was sitting waiting the return of her husband from his daily toil. It was almost midnight; her children were in bed—they were accustomed to rise early, from the eldest to the youngest, to add to the common stock—a stock diminished by the intemperance of the father, who, for some time, had been in the habit of spending his evenings at a neighboring public house. His wife was an industrious woman, and the duties of her family had engaged her attention up to that hour. She put away some articles of clothing she had been mending for one of the children; and, wearied in mind and body, anxiously waited for the well-known step of her husband. She had prayed long for her husband's conversion, and, thus far, saw no answer to her prayers; but her confidence in God remained unshaken; and now, placing the Bible (her solace and joy since she had found the way of peace) on the seat of the arm-chair, she knelt and read some of the precious promises of God; then pouring forth her soul in simple childlike prayer, such

as only a woman strong in faith could have offered, she rose, refreshed, strengthened, and calm. Throwing a shawl over her head, she wended her way to the too well-known public house. As she raised the latch, the clock struck one.

Her husband was sitting in the bar with some of his fellow workmen and the landlady, when she entered. In an angry tone he bade her go home. The landlady said, "Wait a little, your husband will go with you." She advanced to the table where they were sitting, and said in a calm voice to the landlady:

"Mrs. —— seven years is a long time to wait for anything, is it not?"

"Yes," said the landlady, but fourteen years is longer, is it not?"

"Yes," answered the wife, "but twenty-one years is longer still. I have waited and prayed twenty-one years for the conversion of my husband; and as sure as he is sitting in your bar, I shall live to see him pass this house, and have no inclination to enter; for God will answer my prayer."

She turned to leave the room, and her husband followed her; but no angry word passed his lips—he seemed to quail before her.

About this time, the Rev. J. Rattenbury was stationed at Leeds. On the Sunday following the night just mentioned, Martin ——— was induced to accompany his praying wife to hear him. The text announced was the pious resolution of Ruth: "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." The word came home with power, the arrow of conviction sank deep into his soul. For several days he groaned for mercy; but the hour of deliverance came.

"The Spirit answered to the blood,
And told him he was born of God."

On the Sunday after his conversion, Martin returned from the chapel to his own happy home, with a firm step—the mid-day meal was spread upon the table—children were already seated; but his heart was full. "Children," said he, "your mother's prayers are answered. I have passed that house where I spent so much time and money, without the least desire to enter. Let us praise the Lord together." They fell upon their knees—he by the arm-chair, on the spot which had been, in times past, a Bethel and an Ebenezer to his wife—and with joyful heart, they two raised their hearts and voices in gratitude and praise to God, who had plucked him as a brand from the burning; alike acknowledging his weakness, and asking strength to stand in the hour of temptation.

God heard those prayers: and Martin ——— became as eminent for piety as he had before been prominent in the service of Satan.

Holy Bible.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." —Mark 16: 15, 16.
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace." —Rom. 10: 15.

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SERMON XXVIII.*

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THE CHURCH'S PIETY, THE PULPIT'S POWER.

"And Moses said unto Aaron, what did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? And Aaron said, let not the anger of my Lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, make us gods which shall go before us."—EXODUS XXXII: 21, 22, 23.

THE history of which this is a part, is familiar to you. Moses had gone, and as he alone gave reality to the presence of God, the children of Israel considered Jehovah too as gone. Their old idolatry still in vigorous life, they asked Aaron, as he himself says, to make them gods to supply the place of the one they had lost. Moved by their demands, and yielding against his judgment and conscience to the influences about him, he gave them what they desired.

This transaction illustrates the power of a people over the minds of those who are set to guide them, and suggests the

* Preached at the opening of the Synod of Pennsylvania, Oct. 18, 1864.

topic on which I propose to speak on this occasion :—THE INFLUENCE OF THE PIETY OF THE CHURCH UPON THE INTELLECT OF HER MINISTRY.

If one would know at specific times, the peculiar trains of thought occupying the church, he will turn naturally to the pulpit. He will have in the themes most familiar there and in the manner in which they are treated, an index of the mind and heart of the people. For the most part the new thoughts in religion which lie embryonic in the church are brought forth in shape and life by her teachers; they may not have been originated by them, they may have been floating vaguely in the popular mind, but in general their enunciation is made by those to whom the work of guiding the church is committed. The constitution of the ministry is for this very end, for this were they appointed, and if they do not thus inform and control the thinking of the church they fail of all the high designs of God in respect to their function.

It will hardly be disputed that the thinking of the church does in fact in a very great measure depend both in its style and subject upon the thinking of her ministry. This is seen in a single congregation of Christians. An observant man going from house to house will, with little liability of mistake, discover what are the current ministrations under which these families sit. The voices of the last Sabbath from the pulpit lingering upon the mind have given a conscious, more often an unconscious determination to the meditations of the week. This will be seen, not during one week or one year, but week by week and year by year. It is the legitimate and intended influence of the pulpit; and if just such an influence be not executed, if just such effects are not seen, if the preacher does not thus leave his signature upon the people, he and they may be assured that the utterances of that pulpit are only murmurs, and that he needs something to give him character as a minister of Jesus Christ.

These remarks may be made as truly of a much wider field. The preacher gives character to the thinking of the age in which he lives, he goes before and marks out the path for the church. In this is the responsibility and the value of the pulpit. The people may not recognize this influence, the ministry may ignore it, but it exists, the church thinks through her ministry and the products of her mind depend on the working of theirs. God has made it so.

But this is by no means an unreciprocated influence, the moral no less than the physical force does not press in one way alone, the action and reaction are equal. This is seen, as before, within the limits of a particular congregation as well as in the wider field of any single period. It appears in the practical

workings of a pastor's life. As from week to week he comes into contact with his people, his mind and heart are shapen by the touch. A conversation in a sick chamber, a word heard or uttered by the wayside has generated thoughts and feelings that find their form and birth in the ministrations of the next Sabbath. They live and are the pioneers of many succeeding days of retired study. In the same way the church at large is evermore affecting her ministry. You have, in looking at the history of any age, only to discover what were the characteristics of the people and you will from that know what style of men their preachers were. The church surrounds her ministry with a vital atmosphere which they breathe, which is always giving them life or making them ghastly as it is pure or loaded with pestilential vapors. The preacher may set the mind of the church in motion upon the river of thought, but it sweeps onward and bears him with it. At the most he can but guide and control the bark freighted with eternal results, happy if he be able to accomplish even that.

The controlling influence of the church upon the mind of her ministry will be seen either in the truths which they exhibit or in the mode of their presentation. This is the product of their mutual relations. It is inevitable. The church creates a kind of market-place whither are brought such things as her spiritual and intellectual necessities seem to demand. We may go further and say that the spiritual provision, or that which is intended so to be, which is brought there is very much such as shall meet the wants of the church *as they are made known by herself*, she being the judge and making the requisition, what she asks will be given her. The economic law will prevail. Supply will answer demand.

I am not now affirming what ought to be in this matter, nor am I attempting to indicate how far these wishes of the church should be met by her ministry. I am asserting merely a general fact, a sort of law which has prevailed in every age of the church. When her spirituality has been elevated, her ministry has brought her the milk, the honey, the strong meat of divine truth; when she has wandered from God and the powers of the world to come have been withdrawn, they have brought her supplies from the world, husks indeed on which she has starved, but still the provision which she asked. Her ministry have ever been men, partially sanctified men at the best, and, alas, have often, yea even generally, been too weak to stand long against the adverse influence of a whole church about them. I wish to trace this influence to a single point—its bearing upon the mind of the ministry, and inquire how far and how it affects the intellectual work of the preacher. I shall have occasion, while doing this, to speak necessarily of its influence on his spirituality.

Consider the case when the church has lost her spirituality, and yet her ministry have withstood the sweeping current of her decline, abiding in faithfulness to God and with clear-sighted views of the real and eternal necessities of the people. Suppose a true-hearted minister, full of devotion to God and the salvation of men, preaching to a backslidden and worldly church. He exhibits truth as it commends itself to his awakened sensibilities. These are all keenly alive to the grand realities of religion, and the truth which he speaks has a living significance to him; but they fall upon ears and hearts wholly out of sympathy with him. These things move his soul to its nether depths, they make him tremblingly anxious, but they are dead to those whom he addresses, on him they blaze with flaming light, they are scarcely vanishing sparks to them. Now what shall be the effect of this upon the mind of such a man? will it quicken it to new life, will it add vigor to its powers? Will it not rather depress or exhaust it? He feels the immeasurable importance of the things of God and of the soul interests at stake; so he speaks, but his words fail to beget any sympathetic anxiety; he calls but finds no answer; he goes forward but none follow. Shall he now be strong in his work? Shall the commander who sees the battle wavering between victory and defeat, while he orders his delaying squadrons to advance, shall he when he sees them stand nerveless and unmoving while the hurrying moments are making their doom and his, shall he as he rides from rank to rank shouting an advance, now dashing forward calling them to follow, now back again as he sees them wavering and halting still, shall he at such a moment find his intellect grow clear, vigorous, sufficient to direct the evolutions of a host, will he not rather in the tumultuous disappointment find it distracted, himself disheartened till he is scarce fit to fight or flee?

Many a faithful minister has in times of religious depression found his exhausted powers unequal to the work of preaching living truths to dead hearers. At such a time the mind is driven in upon and wears itself out in vain attempts to remedy evils too strong to be controlled and too terrible to be borne. A man may rise above disappointment for a time, but when his whole life is one long toil after results that are never reached when foiled in every effort he sees his hopes dying out one by one till all are dead, he cannot endure the trial, sooner or later his powers fail in the fruitless struggle. This has perhaps been the history of many a holy man in times of the church's declension. Men have seen them wasting, their bodies growing ethereal like their spirit till they have passed away, yet have never known that the soul grown sick, too weary to stay, tired of labours that were only disappointment, of griefs that found

no helping joy, had gone to a land where hope is walking evermore with fruition. They have gone, and the church has never known that she caused their departure.

Such may be the result when the ministry are men so full of the life of God that they are able to breast the sweep of declining religion in the church. But what will it be when they yield to it, and with the people, lose the fervor of their zeal? Among the effects which will follow will be *a decline in the power of the ministry*. They are not as a class, in times of religious declension, men of as great intellectual strength. The religion of the Saviour Jesus reaches every faculty of the believer's nature. The Spirit of God overshadowing the man, as once he brooded over Chaos, creates within him principles of life and like a world rising into form and beauty everything declares the divine power. In this creation the Holy Spirit does more than simply renovate the heart; he makes the believer a new man; the change in his moral nature radiates and every power receives a quickening impulse. The intellect in this new light and life becomes clarified, strengthened, enlarged. The believer once afar off is made nigh to God, and he becomes through the promises which he has received into his soul, a partaker of the divine nature. His mind is now characterized in a measurable degree by the divine intuition. I know not how better to explain or describe that potentiality by which a mind which yesterday seemed sluggish, unable to fix itself or grasp simple truths, to-day, under the forming hand of God's Spirit, is able to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom; that bounding of the soul after truth without processes of reasoning, like the leaping of the babe of Elizabeth when the voice of the mother of Jesus was heard, by which souls that have never learned, seem to know the things of God, that divine instinct by which the soul at once recognizes the touch of truth or of error. Oh, how many intellects has the religion of Christ given to the world!

Every converted man knows of what I speak. He has felt his natural powers grow strong when his heart has become reconciled to God; strong in respect to all that his mind deals with, but strikingly so in regard to religious things. What a marvellous change does a day make in all the intellectual perceptions of divine things when a man has given himself to God! What yesterday seemed dark, meaningless, to-day gleams out luminously with every line sharply defined in grace and beauty. It is out of darkness into light. Nay more, the soul seems to have not only new power and capacities but new material given it, and truths of which the man was never conscious of having had a glimpse are remembered, he knows not how. Memory indeed seems more than herself, to have even creative power, and to

make what was never in the mind consciously before, while the old words of Scripture and the hymns of the church are echoing through the open sunlit chambers of his soul and he cannot tell whence come the voices. It is the divine Spirit bringing all things to remembrance.

This enlightenment, this quickening, is carried forward at every stage of the Christian's progress in the divine life. The more he becomes assimilated to God the more does his intellect receive of that intuitive power of which I have spoken. It changes too with his experience. He finds that his perceptions of divine things alter with the varying phases of his religious life; truth changes, now coming out in bold relief, now fading to shadowy outline just as the gleam of God's countenance streams down or is hidden by passing clouds.

When therefore the life of piety is active the preacher finds his work one of comparative ease, I mean his intellectual work. He does much in brief periods. The divine light illuminates the sacred page and its beauty and its glory appear; every where he has only to look and it becomes an Urim and Thummin to him, as it is, the oracle of God.

This is seen in seasons of religious revival. How much of intellectual labor is done at such times. The preaching is characterized, not by mental weakness but by power; it is not naked exhortation, but mighty unfoldings of truth, truth which the mind grasps and takes possession of as at no other time. The preacher finds mind in living vigorous movement around him, he is equal to the time and he preaches with what, measured by hours and effort, would seem less preparation, but more strongly, with larger reach, firmer hold and clearer manifestation of the truth.

The reverse of this is true in times of religious declension. When the piety of the ministry like that of the church is low, the preachers are enfeebled and lose their power. Now the results of the same amount of mental labor are immeasurably smaller. The man is compelled to reach after, by toilsome strivings, what in a season of better life would have lain close at his hand. Piety, that heavenly enginery which does the minister's work fast and well is decayed, and now he toils, but toils vainly; he sows much but brings in little; he may have been a giant once, but he is weak now; like Sampson he shakes himself as at other times but his strength with the Lord has departed from him.

But further, consider how *the actual labor of the preacher is increased* by the same decline of the church's piety. When the church is far from God, her spiritual discernment has ceased to be quick and there is a demand made for illustration, elaboration and explication, which she did not need when things were better with her. Nay more, the same efforts which in a

time of religious revival excited the deepest interest now seem flat and stale. Every one has noticed something analogous to this in his own experience. How has perhaps a page of Baxter glowed with celestial light at one time, while at another you wonder what could have given it any interest to your mind. So with the hearer; those presentations of truth which would once have deeply moved him, quickened as he was and illuminated by the tongue of fire which rested unseen upon him, now appears weak and contemptible. He is indisposed to hear as he is unable to appreciate the truth in its garb of scriptural simplicity; he craves something different, something which shall have an outward attractiveness of ornament or dress. The preacher must be more than human not to feel this. Yet the same work is upon him, he must keep alive the attention and hold if possible the interest. But how shall it be done? Only by increased intellectual effort. He must supply the hearer's lack of piety and consequent want of spiritual insight by his own mental energy. He stands before his audience in another aspect; not now as God's ambassador but as the people's entertainer. The truths which he utters are listened to with feelings wholly different from those which moved the people in other and better days, they are now to be borne along with him; once they would have pressed forward under the impulse of heart devotion, now he must carry them forward if they move at all, by his own arm. What a temptation is here for the preacher to commend himself not to every man's conscience in the sight of God, but to every man's intellect and taste in his own sight.

The whole tendency of things now is to bring the messenger and not the message prominently before the people. The observer on a star-lit night forgets the telescope through which he looks, in the magnitude and glory of the prospect which it opens before him; as he gazes upon some nebula, at first dim and undefined and sees the star dust separate and suns glow multitudinous in their distinct and full-orbed glory, those suns of azure, amber and of chrysolyte, he forgets in the rapture of the moment tube and lenses, while he cries, how glorious He who strews His universe with suns like sand grains on the ocean beach! When the devout soul has through the devout preacher a vision of the eternal things, he thinks of nothing but them, the speaker is forgotten in the blessed truths he manifests. Not so when the fire of holiness burns low in the heart of the church. Then the things present send up their vapors, and behind the exhalations and the clouds the eternal things are hidden. Now the man becomes the object of attention just as on cloudy nights when the stars are gone, the telescope, its eyeglass, its reflector, its screws and its weights may be taken apart and curiously examined.

When such is the state of things with the church, the preacher cannot but be conscious of it, and as now he and not the things of God hold so prominent a place in the church's thought, he cannot but give care to what she deems of so great importance. The drapery and the dress, not the living truths which they clothe, are now the supreme objects of attention. The people are making an emphatic demand and it must be met, and he does meet it, wrongly indeed yielding, yet yielding, and the strength which once was given to rousing the conscience, moving the heart and quickening the Christian graces, is given to a thousand endeavors to catch the ear and fix the attention. In the better case the ministry now tax their powers to invent great thoughts and to utter them in mighty words, in the worse to elaborate the style and ornamentation, in the lowest to descend to all the ignoble artifices of quaint themes, fantastic figures, startling paradoxes, until the sanctuary of God becomes the play-house to which the gaping crowd have been drawn by the flaming advertisement, and from which they go chattering their delight at the amusement of the hour. It is very pitiable, and sad enough to make an angel weep, but the people would have it so; guilty indeed he who yielded, and guilty they who asked it.

At this point it may be said that these great and divine truths when properly exhibited will of themselves awaken and hold the thoughts of men. Yea, verily, but how much is involved in that one word "properly!" It embraces in its scope both the hearer and the preacher. A bell may be rung, but if in a vacuum, there will be no sound; the trumpet may be blown but if the atmosphere be too rare to vibrate the note will not be uncertain, it will be no note at all. I will not follow the thought.

Suppose that neither preacher nor hearers fall so low as to degrade the church of God in the way I have hinted at, but still both are under the fatal influence of religious decline, another result high in character but at the same time aside from the great work of Christian indoctrination and sanctification usually follows. The tendency of a depressed state of piety is *to give the matters of mere intellect a more prominent place than those of the heart and will*, to substitute the light of human wisdom for the illumination of the Spirit of God. Her ministry are men of thought and she is a thinking communion. Her thoughts will be employed on religious things, she will demand that her ministers so employ them. But her moral state indisposes her to enjoy any presentations of them except as shall conduce to her intellectual gratification. You shall find at such a time therefore, an immense mental activity and not sloth in the teachers of religion. Recognizing the requirements of the church, intellectual power exerted on religion, they will give it.

It will be an age of philosophy. Men will be unraveling all problems of nature, divine, angelic, human, explicating with keen refinements the intricacies of our faith; science will be invoked, philosophic schemes will be called in, the things of God will be run in the mould of human systems, the church and her teachers intent meanwhile upon the work as though it were the work of God.

Those were the palmy days of religious philosophy when John Duns Scotus, that "most subtile doctor," there in Oxford chopped the logic fine, and when Thomas, "the angelic doctor," confuted him; when absolute necessity, divine will in His being and Trinity, knowledge, essence, individual reality, pure spirit, were discussed with mighty energy; the church meanwhile standing open-mouthed at their wondrous subtilties, and the luminosity of the things of God. But, ah, it was a time when spiritual life in this rarified atmosphere was well-nigh exhaled.

At such a time the Bible will not be neglected; it will be studied with intense eagerness, but the studies will be those of the letter, the expositions will partake of the prevailing spirit, and its truths will be exhibited as geologists discourse on fossil beds, chemists talk of ethereal gases, or anatomist of dead organisms.

Such a time will not be without its uses, but it will be a time of evil out of which God will bring good. It will be a time of preparation for better days. God will employ these subtilties for his own glory. He will sift from this mountain heap of chaff the golden kernels, nor suffer one truth valuable to souls to be lost. When that better time has come some holy wanderer through the dreary desert will pick up the gem which lies in the waste of sand and set it in the Saviour's diadem for a devout church to look at and admire. In a time of religious progression men do not despise learning or science, the church turns these to her service, she bids her ministers employ them, and they do; they take science and literature and breathe into them the breath of life; they seize upon results and use them as lightning gathers up the garnered force of electric clouds and discharges it in one resistless bolt. Not so in her state of declension and spiritual apathy; her ministers will gather but not use; they will think but their thoughts will be dead—correct, beautiful in form and feature, but dead; they will define her faith clearly, make philosophies of her salvation, theories of grace, they will bring out her evidences and make them strong. This will be the sown seed of the hour, its harvest will be by and by. In the eleventh century the school-men employed their great powers in high-wrought absurdities, yet their discussions were not confined to these alone, but soared with eagle flight into the upper regions of metaphysical

refinements. These opinions, which in these later times are elaborated with all the zeal and interest of new-found discoveries, these discussions of substance and inherance, necessity and accidence, essence and phenomenon, of original sin and prevenient grace, ability, free-will, they were all conned over centuries ago; old monks leaning shaven heads on shrivelled hands, while the gray light struggled in through dusty bars, had these same thoughts, almost these same words passed those thin lips and were murmured or angrily uttered in vaulted cells which long ago have crumbled down in dust; taxed brains in bewildered gaze were looking down into those nether depths where now, O philosopher, thou art trying to peer; thou art walking in no new path; subtilties as subtile, distinctions as nice, views as clear as thine, ah, they were all familiar to hooded brethren eight hundred years ago.

These metaphysical discussions on religion belonged to a time of declension and with it passed away. As soon as an awakened church called for different things her ministers gave them to her; these dreams fled with her waking. The like fruits belong to any age when she loses her spirituality and will be intense in their character as the decline becomes great; they will give place to a better harvest when she awakes again to spiritual life.

Our discussion would not be complete did I not refer to the effect of a spiritual decline upon the preacher when he becomes conscious of the disparity between his and the church's conceptions and the actual import of the truth. He finds in his own heart a manifest want of accordance with the immeasurable importance of the matters with which he is concerned. His utterance of it he knows is feeble and lifeless, and indeed that here in his own heart lies the cause; he looks at the church and sees a deep insensibility to eternal realities, a world-wide variance between the state of her heart and the truths she believes. In this case what shall he do?

He may do one of three things. He may give himself to the work of bringing his soul up to a state of sympathy with these great themes, or he may pass them lightly, or he may preach them boldly *as if* he felt them. If he does the first and gives his labor to making his heart right, he possibly takes away so much of intellectual energy while the church, which recognizes no such necessity and has no sympathy with him, demands all his power. If he does the second and deals superficially and transiently with these momentous truths, because neither his own nor the church's heart is prepared to deal with them, they become dim, lose what little power they have, and in the end change their form; the symbols remain the same but now they

peep and mutter though once they spoke like the oracles of God. If the preacher does the third and preaches these things boldly when his heart is out of sympathy and the church does not feel them, then the great law of passive impressions bears upon him with terrific force and the more emphatically he speaks of sin and death and the Judgment, the more hard grows his heart and the more these dread realities become dreams to him and to them. Thus he is tossed about; if he preach he hardens, if he preach not he is faithless to a great trust, and in the conflict his powers are wasted and his strength departs.

Such are some of the effects which a depressed state of piety produces on the ministry. Much more might be said but I forbear. Permit me without any review to suggest in the presence of this subject two or three remarks.

How vigilant, my brethren, should we be as ministers, in maintaining the life of God in our souls! With a clear perception of the danger we should be all the more earnest that our spirituality should remain evermore uninfluenced by any decline, if such there should be among our people. With them, in the most intimate relations, let our life be such as shall lift them upward, and every new impulse from their life shall give greater power to ours. Nothing but a perpetual inspiration from above will do for us.

If I am not mistaken, this discussion bears upon the absence of that which many spiritually minded Christians look for in the ministrations of the pulpit, and divides the responsibility for it with the church herself. Their hearts are asking for something they do not get, they hunger and are not fed, their intellects are employed, their tastes are gratified, but their souls are hungering still. While the reason and the guilt rests undoubtedly upon the ministry, and I would not seek to evade or deny it or shift the responsibility from them, should not the church take to herself a portion at least of the guilt? Does she not often put her ministry upon a work they were never set to do? Does she not regard them as the Master never intended them to be regarded? Is there not a spiritual dearth in their ministrations because she demands intellectual power more than spiritual insight or devotion? Does she not ask them to walk and lead in paths where neither she nor they can find pasture, and then ask that they shall nourish her on the thistles which alone do grow there?

May we not find, too, from our subject a reason for the alleged and actual want of power in the pulpit? It is sometimes asked, why do not ministers preach as lawyers plead before a jury? I answer, because the jury is not there. Let the church appear in the sanctuary, a body of men who have come to attend to

matters which shall be placed before them and nothing else, let her assembly be a company of hearers sworn to give the best powers of their intellect and the sturdiest activities of their will to the address that they shall hear, let them feel themselves to be under the highest obligations to empty their minds of prejudice and yield themselves to the truth, let them be men who have come, not to be amused or even gratified, but to act upon their received convictions and act promptly and before they attend to another thing;—how long, think you, would it be before the lips of the preacher would be touched with fire, how long before they would begin to speak so that men should see realities great and solemn passing before them, realities which concern them, each man, now, for himself and for eternity? Not long! You would soon hear words of power, words that would seem spoken by the voice of God, making the soul stand trembling and subdued before the Infinite.

My subject suggests an explanation of the apparently contradictory facts:—a scarcity of ministers and yet an abundance of ministers unemployed in their legitimate work. On every side we see vacant pulpits, and on every hand preachers who do not preach. I conceive that the spiritual condition of the church goes very far to make it plain. A scarcity of ministers might readily be caused by a depressed state of piety, for at such times, there would be comparatively few converted and the ranks of the ministry might become thin because the number entering would not keep pace with the number falling. This, however, will not explain the state of things which we see. If that were the only cause there would be few men unemployed. The question is, why so great a want, while yet so many wait to fill it? The simple answer is because the church does not find them suited to her purpose. If we press the question further and demand why does she not find them so fitted, we shall obtain the solution in her own spiritual condition.

Her spiritual decay sets in from two directions and with combined force tends to produce this result. It acts as we have seen on the intellectual powers of the ministry and renders them measurably unfit for their work, while it makes new and peculiar demands upon them. In times of deep religious feeling in the church, the fervor of individual piety quickens the natural power of the preacher and supplies his failures while at the same time it predisposes and enables the people to profit by his ministrations, because they have been made acceptable and powerful by the illustrations which their own enlightened and lively experience has given. They receive all and they make more than his preaching in itself possesses. In this way the striking differences in natural ability between different preachers are not much noticed; on the mountain-top herself, to her exten-

ded view the hills seem alike and all together are a broad and lofty table-land. The man of slenderer ability is magnified because of the great message which he brings, while the more brilliant is hidden behind the truth which alone fills the vision of the hearer. "So it was," says Isaac Taylor, speaking of the lay preachers in the Methodist church in its early days, "that while Wesley and three or four educated colleagues held to the few and great principles of the Gospel by the intentness of their minds and the fervent symplicity of their zeal, and while the lay preachers by the paucity of their ideas and the slenderness of their knowledge kept in the same narrow path, the *result* toward the people was to prevent the vast disparity between the two classes of teachers from becoming too painfully apparent. This is seen by contrast everywhere in communions from which evangelical fervor has departed, for there all the vast difference between one preacher and another, in natural ability and in furniture, is painfully felt and accurately measured by practiced hearers. But let the energies of heavenly truth return to such bodies and these disparities would become less conspicuous or would almost wholly cease to be regarded."

And let me add a striking confirmation of my thought, in the words of Edwards in his account of "The Revival of Religion in New England." "When," says he, "the Spirit of God was wonderfully poured out in this place, more than seven years ago and near thirty souls in a week, take one with another, for five or six weeks, were to appearance brought to Christ, and the whole town seemed to be alive and full of God, there was no such notion (referring to criticism of ministers) or humor prevailing here; when ministers preached here, as many did at that time, young and old, our people did not go about to discern whether they were men of experience or not; they did not know that they must; Mr. Stoddart never brought them up in that way; it did not seem natural to them to go about anything of that nature; but when any minister preached, the business of every one was to listen and attend to what he said, and apply it to his own heart and make the utmost possible improvement of it. And it is remarkable that never did there appear such a disposition in the people to relish, approve of, and admire ministers' preaching as at that time; such expressions as these were frequent in the mouths of one and another, on occasion of preaching of strangers here, viz. "*that they rejoiced that there were so many such eminent ministers in the country; and they wondered that they had never heard the fame of them before; they were thankful that other towns had so good means and the like.*" It is not so in times of the church's declension; then she throws her ministry upon their natural or acquired abilities, those who have them in sufficient force to meet the demands of her culti-

vation and refinement she employs, calling them to her service, those who have them not she passes by.

Here is a state of things that calls for our deepest consideration. There is but one way in which it can be remedied. O! if a divine breath should sweep over the church and make her live unto God, what a change would appear! Her opened ear would be ready to listen to the gospel from whatever lips, yea, the living spirit would touch those lips, her clarified and intense perceptions would give their words a sudden revealment, as heat makes the invisible ink to come out from the naked page; at her call her rejected sons would hasten from their worldly avocations to speak burning words from overflowing hearts. Tired of intellectual subtilities and flowers of rhetoric she would ask for bread, and Christ's touch would multiply even the few small loaves till the hungry multitude would be fed. Then there would be a blessed church and a happy, full ministry. Girded each with strength they would go forth to the conquest of a world; then there would be an apostolic church and an apostolic ministry, yea, and apostolic preaching, full of living divine power. May God hasten it in its coming!

SERMON XXIX.

By Rev. HORACE EATON,

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MORAL ANALOGIES OF CENTRAL PARK.

"I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits. I made me pools of water to water withal the wood that bringeth forth trees."—ECCL. ii: 5, 6.

THE first and fairest abode of man in this world was Eden, the garden of God. Some of the relics of that state of innocence, trees, flowers, birds, still survive the ruthless power of sin. There still lingers in the human soul a taste for that pristine beauty. Man still sighs to realize again the faded vision that flits in the dark background of his history. There is in his soul an instinctive yearning to recover that forfeited and lost existence. Beauty is grateful even to our depraved nature.

These blind gropings for primitive blessedness reach out and seize upon grounds adorned with fountains, with vines growing upon the banks, and trees where the birds build their nests. When Balaam looked down from Nebo upon the peaceful en-

campment of the chosen tribes he exclaimed: "How goodly are thy tents O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel, — as valleys are they spread forth—as trees of lign aloes, which the Lord hath planted, as cedar-trees beside the waters."

A soul-satisfying good has been associated with grounds thus improved, with nature thus intensified, where you can see the freshness and variety of the whole world in miniature,—where every specimen of vegetable life, every wing of the feathered throng and every creature that passeth through the paths of the sea—all have their representatives.

The princes of Egypt and Syria all had their places, surrounded with gardens. Ahasuerus made a feast seven days in "the court of the garden." When he rose up in anger against Haman, he went into his "palace garden" to walk. Ahab wished to enclose Naboth's vineyard in his royal park. In the Scriptures we read of gardens of nuts, of pomegranates, of olives and vines. The kings of Assyria had their hanging gardens, and the Grecian poets sang of Elysian fields and the islands of the blest. But none more fully realized the picture of the first paradise than Solomon. The passage in my text is thus translated in the Jewish Targum: "I made me well-watered gardens and paradises, and sowed them with all kinds of plants,—some for use of eating, some for use of drinking, and some for purposes of medicine—all kinds of plants of spices. I planted in them trees of beauty and shade, and all trees of spices brought from India, and every tree that produced fruit, and the border of the garden was from the wall of the citadel, which is in Jerusalem by the waters of Siloa. I chose reservois of water which were for the watering of trees and plants, and I made me fish-ponds of water, and I made me pools to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees."

In the great metropolis of this nation there is much to see with wakeful eyes and Christian sensibilities. Scarcely have I ever had my heart glow more fervently with both temporal and spiritual pleasure than when viewing the gathered wonders of the CENTRAL PARK. A landscape so enchanting, planted in the very centre of that great city must become the central attraction of the nation.

While roaming around this landscape, I could not hold my thoughts back from spiritual analogies. Parallels between *this work of man* and the *Word of God* crowded upon my thoughts.

1. As I entered upon these enchanted grounds, I was struck with their *extent*. Not only a fair but a *large* portion of the country seemed set like a jewel in the heart of the city. The imagination recoils from limits—it rejoices in the boundless. When we get round a field or comprehend a subject, delight ceases.

The Central Park has indeed limits, yet they lie beyond the eye of the visitor as he wanders amid the luxuriance. Hills peep o'er hills. Would not grounds thus adorned, nearly as wide as the whole length of this village and in length reaching nearly to East Palmyra, be beyond full comprehension or satiety? Would not 1100 acres, stretching on over hill and valley seem sufficiently boundless to elude the imagination for any reasonable time?

In all this area of two miles and a half in length, and more than a half a mile in width, there is but one spot where the eye can sweep the whole domain or comprehend the deep design of the plan. Upon the highest eminence there is a tower for observation.

Now the extent of this royal park may well illustrate the length and breadth of the Holy Scriptures.

If we begin with Moses and run along the avenues of inspiration, we come to fields of history, precept and poetry. In the landscape of God's Word, there are two great divisions. The first has thirty-nine sections and is termed the Old Testament. Here you mark the names of Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, Ezra, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel,—some twenty-one ancient gardeners and surveyors. Here is the moss of age,—the trees bear the mark of years. But the fruit is the same as that of the *new* field. The New is but a transplanting from the Old. It has twenty-seven divisions, and bears the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James and Jude.

From the first laying out and planting of this Divine enclosure to its completion was some 1500 years, and yet every line and department retain a beautiful harmony with every other line and enclosure. Holy men of God sketched and planted as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. There is but one spot where the whole design and effect can be comprehended—that is the *cross* on Calvary.

2. I traced another analogy between this royal Park and the Bible in the *natural variety* there witnessed.

When God proportioned the land and water scenery of this world, it was perfect and beautiful in His sight. The Lord rejoiceth in His works. Though the mountains may seem a waste and the deserts a mistake in the great plan, yet in the eye of the Architect in Chief, every part is essential to the whole. To us woodland and lake seem thrown in without order or design, and yet a perfect plan underlies the whole arrangement of forest, field and river. The world itself is a splendid park, planned and executed by Him, whose mind is the secret place of beauty and strength. It is the art of Jehovah to *conceal* art. There seems a wild and careless profusion to his works—all discord, harmony not understood.

As we wandered over the fields of Central Park, there was an ease, and naturalness in every transition that concealed the rule and the line. Every thing seemed as though it *grew* so of its own accord.

The face of the ground appeared to retain all its natural expression—the boulder and the ledge still bear the marks of a thousand wintry storms. Hill and valley, hillock and lawn alternate with all the freedom of an unshorn landscape. Paths run as naturally as though laid out by the browsing deer. Springs run where they please, and without leading-strings the vine creeps on the ground or climbs the rocks. The wild rose and the mountain daisy mingle their fragrance with the far-scented magnolia. Trees from Japan and from the frozen North wave in unison along the same vale and on the same hill-side. Eternal variety and loving harmony combine.

The lowliest violet and the patrician tulip drink the same dew, and breathe the same air. Through all this variety and fraternity of the universal republic of trees, vines and flowers, we found a still higher delight in watching the variety of *animal* existence.

Along the sleeping pond, the duck was grubbing up the roots, while the swan was boasting his imperial white, as with the sluggish stroke of his paddle, he moved in triumph over the silvery surface of the lake, while his mate was at her domestic work around her nest on the shore. The black swan sailed in the same waters, while the pelican, bittern, and crane were oiling and refitting their plumage on the neighboring rocks. The eagles, like the wisest sachems, seemed in grave counsel, scarcely deigning to cast an eye on inferior bipeds. The wolf looked shy; the fox seemed meditating mischief, the sloth groaned at every motion; the monkeys were sporting in brainless mirth; the parrot enjoyed her mimicry; while every kind of dove mingled their cooing with the squall of the peacock, strangely contrasting with his plumage.

Vegetable life of all kinds—from the cedar in Lebanon to the hyssop that grew out of the wall—tribes of animal life, that go forth on the face of the earth, or that pass through the paths of the sea or that fly in the open canopy of heaven. In all this array, natural and artificial, there were no stuffed animals—nothing shoddy or stuccoed. All was simple, natural, real. How profound the genius that from the rough brake and fern patch could form a landscape of such pleasing, natural wildness.

Now this unshorn variety of Central Park suggested to me the exuberance and originality of the blessed Bible. True, the Bible has but one object, viz. to answer the one question—How can man be just with God? and it is only by standing at the foot of the cross you can grasp the scope and design of the Holy Scriptures.

But we are not told how man may be saved in the same bald phrase in which you would clothe a medical prescription or a writ of habeas corpus. The Bible attracts to itself every ray of light, and mingles every color of the rainbow, every reflection of beauty, and unfolds pure truth in its happiest attitude. The Bible is the Central Park, presenting every specimen of thought, life, virtue and holiness. It is a landscape alternating woodland and lawn.

As you first enter its broad fields, you meet the even and shaven field of sacred *story* and *biographg*. Here mothers lead their children and regale their minds with the purest, simplest sights and sounds. Farther on are the prophets and the psalms, the wild and intricate "ramble" ground, winding up and down amid sweet nooks, hidden grottos, and gurgling streams. Along through these cool and breathing shades, mature and meditative piety loves to wander and finds in every leaf and flower a symbol and a pledge of the trees that grow in the paradise above.

Going on to the "new" section and the farther end of this sacred park, we descry bold crags, the fastnesses of sound doctrine, the Romans and other epistles, where the *oaks* of Christian faith have their roots, nor can they be carried away by every wind of doctrine. In short eternal *variety* marks the blessed Bible. Here the child and the man of four-score, the wild man of the forest and the plain man of the field are alike at home. Here the poet finds the freest song and the orator the purest eloquence. Here is law for the jurist, the "materia, medica" for the physician, truth for the preacher, problems for the mathematician; here the warrior may find his armor, the mechanic his square, and the sailor his compass. But most of all, the mourner, the convicted, the heavy-laden find the balm of Gilead, bracing air, rest and health.

Truth in the Bible is not wrought out in systems no more than botany is found in classified forms in the Central Park or geology among the rocks. Truth comes to us in the Bible in chunks, in rough masses, in wild, promiscuous profusion. We do not ride through the Bible on some doctrinal turnpike, we wander on foot through every winding ravine, snuff the fragrance of the wild flowers and inhale the fresh air as it comes through the thickets and the hedge. Nature and revelation are uncramped by systems. The waters of life do not run in an artificial canal. God did not bring his people out of Egypt into Canaan on an air-line rail-road. The Word of God is full of windings and lines of beauty. To us the longest thread is shortest in the great labyrinth of his designs. Says Dr. Adams: "In the construction of that book by which we are made wise unto salvation is inwrought such curious combinations of history, poetry, narrative, proverb, coral-song, argument, rhetoric, aph-

orisms as in this sense also to make it *the* book, the epitome of all knowledge—the one intellectual marvel of the world. As the skillful player on an organ useth one stop after another, now evoking the shrillness of the reed, now the mellowness of the flute, now the vibration of the harp, now the clear ringing of the clarion, now the heavy swell of the diapason, so did the Spirit of God in the preparation of the One Book for all men and for all time make use of all the varied accomplishments and faculties of the human mind, forming out of them one holograph, the one incomparable, harmonious book of the world."

3. I observed the Central Park *dispensed pleasure, health and life alike freely to rich and poor.* Its broad and inviting avenues are open to all. There you may see the one, who acts the millionaire, dashing by with his coach and six, lines in hand, and on yonder rural seat rests the weary seamstress, who has come out from the heated garret with her pale and wilted children. She is just as welcome to the refreshing scene; the western breeze fans her faded form as blandly, flowers smile upon her as sweetly, and when music comes with its tender and voluptuous swell, she enjoys as keenly its exhilerating and elevating power. No haughty lordling can close these gates and put the key in his pocket. Though the cost was untold, though the unbroken glebe was secured at an expense of five millions, five hundred thousand dollars, and the improvements were not less than the original cost, yet the noble spirit that prompted the benefit made it free. It is emphatically the "poor man's park." It sends beauty, purity and health down through every dark avenue, into every garret, cellar and soul.

It is beautiful, it is more, it is sublime to see the panting thousands moving out of their squalid abodes, and swarming away to this fountain of health, exhileration and joy. Every rich man and every poor man owns the Central Park. He can drink in its life, immerse himself in its glory, just as really as though he owned it all and was the only participator, as the light and air of heaven are none the less mine because others enjoy their abounding good. Greek and Jew, the warm-hearted Irishman, the enduring German, the vivacious Frenchman, the substantial Briton, are all alike welcome. Here neither hue nor standing, caste nor clique, are privileged. The mob that pursued the colored man stopped before it reached Central Park. The question is not asked, whether you are Catholic, Protestant, Mussulman, Buddhist or disciple of Confucius.

How beautifully does this symbolize the free and diffusive spirit of the Bible. Here the rich and the poor meet together and the Lord is the maker of them all. Here there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

As the Park is the great lung and purifier of that weary, worn

and restless throng, so the Bible is the great ventilator, and the elevator of earth's millions. And as the high and low, aged and young mingle in the pleasures, health and joys of that public garden, so the Bible is the retreat for all. Here the young man and maiden, old men and children, may freely obtain rest and recreation. In the Bible landscape, what fields for Sabbath enjoyment; what ranges for individuals, families, Sabbath-schools.

4. It was also my delight to mark the order and obedience to law throughout that consecrated spot. Here law was supreme. But yet it was not law in the grim form of manacles or prison doors; but law moderated by wisdom and love, appealing to the taste, the sensibilities, the heart. The very genius of order was impersonated in the flowering hedge, the shaven lawn, and the natural finish of the whole scene. Every one, as he participated in the benefit, felt that obedience was essential to his own and the common good.

The universal loveliness threw a barrier around every rose, every bed of violets. Those, "fit for treason, stratagems and spoils, the motion of whose spirits was as dull as night, and their affections dark as Erebus,"—when they came under the mild radiance of this pleasing scene found their nerves of steel relent. Under this softening touch, tigers became tame. Here law spoke so quietly, yet so firmly, that the bear seemed to smile, and all the beasts looked sleek and kind.

In all these grounds I saw no instance of ill-nature except in a pair of fighting peacocks. Grace, variety, music had exchanged the spirit of disobedience for harmony and law. A mob could not be raised in Central Park. Central Park is a civilizer, a missionary, a moral police.

But all this is but a shadow of the *Bible* landscape. Here law is written in loving kindness and tender mercy. Contemplate the love of God as it is wafted from the hills—the Eternal Hills—as displayed on Calvary. How gather the flowers of poetic beauty and song; how roam through the promises and not feel their refinement and elevation!

As the rivulet covers itself with a line of green, as it winds through the meadow, so refinement, private virtue, mental elevation, obedience to law, the fear of the Lord follow in the track of God's Word.

As the beauty and order of the *earthly* landscape is a teacher of law, a civilizer, a moral police for the great metropolis of our nation—so the Bible is the source of mental enlargement, moral purity and civil order—the harmonizer of strife, the support of law in this our lost world. It tames the passions and writes the precept upon the heart.

Lastly, the crowning glory of the Central Park is the *river* that comes down through it from its distant headsprings. The

garden is a receiver and reservoir of that stream of life, which through secret channels gives strength and freshness to every root and sends off on either side fountains, jets, lakes, to diversify the whole landscape. The river gives life to the Park. Without it the fonntains and lakes would present a dry and hideous bed. Where these waters come there is life, cleanliness and health. All vegetable and animal life rejoices in the flow of these watery treasures.

There *is* a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God, the Holy Place of the tabernacle of the Most High. The refreshings of the Spirit are the waters of life; and these waters come down from the Highlands, from the mountains of God, and find their channels and reservoirs in the Word of God. The Holy Ghost is the "Spirit of Truth," the Spirit of the Word.

The Spirit quickens, enlightens, comforts by the Word. Every chapter and verse is made quick, enlightening and comforting by the Spirit. The Bible landscape is the receiving reservoir of the water of life, from whence channels go forth to water the city of our God.

If we have our souls awakened by the love of God we shall walk with God in his works. We shall have a communion of soul with every tree, leaf and flower. The blessed Edwards gathers evidence of his regeneration from his spiritual insight into God's works. "God's excellency," he says, "His wisdom, his purity and love seem to appear in everything,—in sun, moon and stars,—in the clouds and blue sky,—in the grass, flowers and trees,—in the water and all nature, which used greatly to fix my mind in contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer." Such contemplations Edwards had when ranging along the banks of the Hudson River, in New York, some 125 years ago. How ecstatic would have been his thoughts, had he then fallen in with a landscape like the Central Park.

This temporal arena of beauty has thus suggested to me an illustration of the extent, variety, freeness, elevating power, and spiritual resources of the Word of God.

It is evident from our subject that we should search the Scriptures. You should read the Bible just as you would know most and enjoy most of the Central Park. You would not hasten through it with a vacant stare. You would seek to find out the shaded ravines; you would climb up among the rocks. Often among the less frequented portions you will find the clear fountain, the solitary flowers. There the choicest bird may sing darkling. "The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats and the rocks for the conies."

So in the less frequented portions of God's Word; in the hard names of Chronicles you will find some of the choicest truths, illustrations and examples.

We boast an *open* Bible,—but an open Bible will do no good unless it is read; unless it is searched. Do not forget to drink of the fountains there, especially that nearest the cross.

Lastly,—if such is the beauty of the earthly Paradise, what will be that of the Heavenly? Our theme has involved much of the imagery with which the sacred writers set forth the Glory of Heaven. There trees, flowers, fruits have their counterparts in holy souls and holy songs. "Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the *Lord* is,—for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters and that spreadeth out her root by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

The Scriptures speak of a garden enclosed, as the trees of righteousness. "Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits,—calamus and spikenard with all trees of frankincense, a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters and streams from Lebanon."

As men love to walk in *their* gardens and take their delight, so Christ comes into *his* garden with great delight, and the Church longs for his approach, saying, "Awake, O, North wind and come thou South, blow upon my garden that the spices thereof may flow out Let my Beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits. My beloved has gone down into his garden to the beds of spices to feed in his gardens and to gather lilies. I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine. He feedeth among the lilies."

SERMON XXX.*

By Rev. BYRON SUNDERLAND, D.D.
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THE BETTER HOPE.

"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did."—HEBREWS vii: 19.

THIS was the Levitical law under which the whole economy of the old dispensation had been administered. The better hope which is here put not so much in contrast as in antithesis with that law, is the hope of the Gospel—the hope of the believer.

The law made nothing perfect, meaning that it did not restore man from sin to holiness—did not secure the knowledge and

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worship of the true God among men—did not effect the final objects of the divine government—did not render society perfect, in this or any other life, in this or any other sphere.

But the bringing in of a better hope did accomplish all these results. Of course we have no time to show how or in what manner this is done in the gospel, what we are concerned to do now is to speak of this better hope—as the hope of the believer—of the humble and faithful Christian whose confidence is alone in Jesus, and whose conversation is in Heaven—to inquire briefly, than what it is better—in what sense better—to whom better.

I. It is not so much the law which it transcends, for the law is holy, just and good—both the law and the hope are from God—each as He appoints—but we may say that this hope is far better than all other hopes, whether for the present world or for the world to come.

II. 1. It is better in the sense of thooretical as well as practical life—in the sense of satisfying and exalting the mind—of informing and sanctifying human nature—in the sense of development and culture, in the sense of current progress and of final destiny.

2. It is better than all other human hopes, because of its animating principle—divine love in the form of mercy—manifested grace.

3. It is better because of its foundation—standing on the great remedial system of the one atonement—Christ offered—all claims satisfied—all parties approving.

4. It is better in its securities, for it abides in the everlasting purpose, above every disturbing element. It cannot be hindered or thwarted. No power in the universe can overreach or uproot it. It was calculated upon a full combination of all the elements with which it had to deal—it was projected upon a computation of all the data which can ever enter into the problem, and therefore it can never fail.

5. It is better in its design and adaptation, for it secures in man and for him what nothing else can secure. It makes him a noble character, conformed to truth and justice, and operates this assimilation by means at once manifold and mysterious, but most effectual and most satisfactory. It aims to confer and does confer regeneration of soul, removal of sin, divine favor and glorious immortality.

6. Hence it is better in its aspirations, for it looks up into eternity, unlimited by the narrow bounds of time. It takes hold upon the existence which lies beyond, and counts the longest, brightest, most smblazoned life on earth as nothing to the dawning of the day which breaks beyond the tomb—a moment of fleeting twilight before the eternal splendor flows.

7. It is better in its influence and effect. He that hath this

hope in him purifieth himself; there is in it an ennobling and purifying tendency; it never disappoints, never makes ashamed, never clogs, never wearies, never satiates. It brings us nigh to God; feeds us with the bread of heaven; gives us to drink of the water of life, and fills us with the foretastes of the heavenly existence. It brings home the exile, reclaims the wanderer, restores the alienated, transforms the rebellious and makes all one in the reconciliation; so that God is to the soul the greatest good: this is salvation; this is eternal life.

III. 1. It is a better hope for the poor. They have little to hope for here. Their crust is dry; their cup bitter; their friends few; their days are wearisome and their nights desolate; life one desert; experience one blank: to them fortune is misfortune, time a burden, care a mill-stone about the neck, distress everywhere, relief nowhere. But when the better hope comes to them, O, how changed they are! What a light springs up for their feet! what a joy is born in their heart! now there is another life. Now it is but a little while and they will enter upon everlasting possessions. The word to them is, "Be not afraid! only believe!" See how patient it makes them, and how grateful! I once saw an old man—a town pauper—he had not a living blood relative on the face of the earth; all had been swept off. He lived on common charity, begging his bread each morning from door to door, and yet he was rich in faith toward God, and looked forward to his final estate with unspeakable desire and joy. Once as the sun was setting I sat by the door of his little hut and heard him talk of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. When I die, said he, I want you to preach my funeral sermon from these words, "Return unto thy rest, O, my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." A few months after, when winter had come and all visible nature was cold and frost-bound, God called him, and I preached over his body from those words. I have often thought of them since, and there is a meaning in them deeper now that I shall never lose.

2. It is a better hope for those who are toiling to build up the kingdom of Christ in this world. Would that more loved such work. Yet it is toilsome, and often heart-breaking. What can support the faithful Sabbath-school teacher, or superintendent, or tract distributor, or colporter, or missionary in the populous towns, or in the desolate regions, as they labor from year to year among heathen millions to convert them unto Christ; what but this blessed and far better hope? Christian husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, have found it their comfort down by the family hearth-stone. It has been the prop of God's ministers in all ages. The prophets had it, and the apostles, and all the heralds of the cross, that ever went forth, as they will have it who go forth to the latest time.

3. It is a better hope for all the afflicted. You are well to-day; your plans go smoothly; friends swarm around you. By and by the stroke falls; then goes the lusty man into his chamber and down upon his couch. There he is; God has bound him to it. Now he tosses, but the fever holds him; he struggles, but his strength declines; the prospect darkens; all things are against him. What can the world do now for the poor man? Ah, how such an hour breaks the earthly spell! Now he wants this hope; now he sends for the minister of God; now he prays for mercy! O, if the hope should come to him just then; if this better hope should lift him up, what a light heart in those heavy circumstances! what songs in the night! You say, how is it? I cannot tell. It is a mystery. God's greatest mystery of love! Many a mourner has tried it, and many a widow and many an orphan child, and it never failed.

4. It is a better hope for the tempted in all the walks of life, for every one such seeking its succor it is as a blessed shield embossed all over with God's golden promises—thickly studded and made mightily strong with his word of truth. Grasp it you may; cover you with it and not let it go. It is better than all the contingencies, than all the dreams of earth. If you doubt this, try for yourself and see. No man was ever confounded in it; one hour's experience of its value is worth all abstract theory or speculation. Take the testimony of your fellow-men, the witness of the true church in all ages. One need not stop to prove it mathematically; when one is hungry and can get bread; or cold, and can reach the fire, does he need to pause to ask first for the philosophy of these things? That is mere speculation. The fact is, they are the remedies for hunger and cold; let him receive them and be warmed and filled. So do you with this better hope. O, that men might consider it and be wise! The whole labor of man in this life otherwise, is like rolling the fabled stone of Sysiphus.

5. Once more, it is a better hope for the dying. That day will come to all of us; none can escape it. Sooner or later we must each lie down. And what does a man want then? The friends, riches, honors, titles of this world, what can they do for him then? We brought nothing into the world, and we shall be able to carry nothing out of all these earthly possessions. And yet the soul cannot go on empty and dark. What then does the soul want in the battle of dissolution on the verge of the grave? Surely he wants the better hope, the perfecting, saving hope of the believer; the hope that carries him bravely through the struggle over the river on before the Throne, and plant him there a king and priest for ever unto God! We know this Christian hope can do it. It is no spider's web, no expectation of the wicked hypocrite or deceiver. It springs from the bro-

ken body and the falling blood of Jesus, gendered in his wounds —a river of life shooting from the decays of death; its garlands being abroad in heaven, its strong fibers take hold of the beams of the habitation of the Eternal God! Whoso has this hope may smile at death and look solemnly on the last slumber. He knows the trumpet will sound, the Resurrection break, and another morning chase away for ever the gloom of the grave. This hope has borne thousands of God's children smiling over the lethean wave, and it will ferry thousands more of every generation throughout all time.

And now we may well reflect how great the marvel of bringing such a hope into the world! Angels wondered, all worlds were amazed when in the fullness of time God brought it in, when it was borne in through the advent, passion, burial, and ascension of Jesus Christ. We cannot tell that story now; but it supervened the law, when that old dispensation had become effetè. It was devised to prosper and perfect what the law could not. It was a proclamation that men hitherto estranged from God might now come nigh to him, not by the ritual, but through the atonement of one who gave boldness of access to the mercy-seat. So it has risen on our world as a great light, to kindle, transform and save the human race.

Thus do I often look upon this vast panorama of Jehovah's works—the sea, and earth, and sky; the grandeur of the firmament, the splendor of rising and setting suns, the moon and stars, the beauteous order of the night, the sweeping clouds, the mighty winds. Beneath I see all hills and vales, all bounteous fields, all beasts, all things of animate creation. I see all change and motion, all circling seasons, and all the rush of multitudinous hosts of men. I see the greatness of towns and states, and I seem to feel a soul that breathes through all of vast expansion, linking us with the Infinite and Eternal! But the mightiest voice that cries to me out of all the quarter of the earth, out of all the surrounding pipes of human fortune, and from the deeps of the great rolling tides of universal, ever-varying human affairs, is the voice of this Divine Revelation, the Word of Life, the better hope. And the world wears a new aspect, grander, brighter, more august, because of it. I see this light playing over all, and all things revealed under and in it, and my soul doth leap at the thought that God sent this embassy to our prison-door; that He kindled this fire in our darkened firmament.

O, glorious hope! What shall not be done for him who shields himself in this? What shall not be done for the world when once this power is felt in its beneficence moving through the earth! God speed this blessed hope and give it access everywhere to the sons of men! Amen.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

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The Blessedness of a Prayer Meeting.

Among the assemblies of belivers on earth, if there is one most interesting and supremely blessed, it must be a prayer-meeting. It is there we sit "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;" there we more fully and practically realize our fellowship in the Lord, our companionship in journey to our Father's house, and, by anticipation, enjoy an inside view of our heavenly home. The distinctions of rank and wealth vanish, the world, with all its distracting and all-absorbing allurements, seems to be shut out for the time being. A spiritual atmosphere appears to prevail, sinful passions to subside, and even the most indifferent "assume a virtue if they have it not." I have been deeply struck with the remarkable fact that individuals who, in their ordinary walk and conversation, are very reserved and diffident, and far from being fluent of speech, have in the prayer-meeting, when called upon to address the Throne of Grace, poured forth a strain of spiritual eloquence surprising to those who know not the power of the "Spirit giving utterance." And as springs are the source and vitality of rivers, so are the prayer-meetings the life and maintenance of the church; and as the traveler in the desert, exhausted with the heats and labors of the journey, turns aside with delight to enjoy the refreshing comfort and coolness of the welcome oasis, so does the Christian, wearied with the business and anxieties of the busy day, betake himself to the enjoyments of the prayer-meeting, as an anticipation of the pleasures of his future heaven. All other enjoyments, no matter how highly seasoned or however varied, after a short time, pall upon the taste and grow insipid, and leave a vacuum in the mind which nothing earthly can fill. But the prayer-meeting—the earthly communion of saints—is ever pleasing, ever new, and those who truly enjoy its blessings wish to enjoy them again and again. Surely those who are conscious that the present life is but an introduction to an eternal and unchanging future, and that future is to be passed in the unveiled and direct presence of our blessed Redeemer, cannot qualify themselves for heaven and its enjoyments by any means equal to the prayer-meeting.

"Then all the storm of life subsides,
And the vext spirit into rapture glides."
—*Chronicle.*

Seeking and Trusting.

I rang the bell at my pastor's door. Looking upon the golden sunset, I strove to calm my throbbing heart; but the peace and beauty without were mocked by inward agony—the agony of a divinely awakened accusing conscience.

"Satan tempted me. 'Make some excuse,' he whispered, as I heard a step in the hall; 'borrow a book, and go home; do not commit yourself as an anxious inquirer, for to-morrow you may go back to the world.'

"But one more powerful than Satan constrained me, and I asked calmly, as my pastor opened the door, 'Can I see you alone, sir?'

"Then he led me to his study, then I said quickly, lest temptation should prevail, 'I am a great sinner. What must I do to be saved?'

"He told me of Christ, and his full and free salvation, and bade me believe and be saved.

"I listened. As one struggling, with blinded eyes and failing strength, amid the fearful rapids which hurry him on to the fatal cataract.

"Then my pastor said he would pray with me, and begged me as he did so, to strive to cast myself upon an all-sufficient Saviour. Kneeling, I followed, word by word, the fervent, trustful prayer, in which he strove to commit my soul to Christ. But my spirit shrank back. I would not trust. I could not be saved.

"As I rose to go, still bearing burden of my guilt, I sought relief from my agony in making and uttering a 'good resolution.' 'One thing I am determined,' said I, 'I will never cease to *seek* Christ, even if I never find him.'

"Seeing the delay and danger, perhaps fatal, which lurked in that resolve, so seemingly fair, my pastor said to me, with an earnestness and assurance I shall never forget, 'Seeking Christ will never save your soul, *you must trust* him.'

"Astonished beyond measure, and grieved at this reply, I 'went away sorrowful' indeed; but thoroughly convinced that I must trust or perish. Still words cannot tell, (such blinding power have sin and Satan, the thick darkness, the impenetrable mystery which hung round the act of faith, till God, in sovereign mercy, opened my eyes, to see the enormous sin and folly of unbelief, and the simplicity of that saving faith which, taking Jesus at his word, yields the soul to Him in unquestioning confidence.

"It is a fearful thought that the breath of mortal lips may turn an immortal soul to heaven or hell. May God, by his open and omnipresent Spirit, mercifully teach those who are called to guide inquiring souls. Let the truth sink into every heart, that it is not *seeking* but *trusting*, which saves the perishing.

"'Many, I say unto you, will *seek* te enter in, and *shall not be able*.' *Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ. and thou *shalt be saved*.—*Congregationalist.*

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